On Unstable Ground?

Teachers' work in a context of policy reform and disaster vulnerability in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (Research)

2016
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Acknowledgements

First and foremost I acknowledge my family. Without them the ability to pursue this research and the motivation to complete it would not be possible. My wife Kate, and daughters Maia and Piper, thank you for your patience, understanding and endless encouragement.

To my extended family, Margaret, Mike, Nana and Pop, Trish, Tony, Anne-Marie, and Christine: thank you for believing in me and tolerating my regular and often unplanned absences and long work hours.

Ritesh Shah, thank you for being a great role model, mentor and friend; your advice and honesty is always appreciated. To all those I collaborated with following the Christchurch Earthquake: Jason Pemberton and Sam Johnson thank you for being the best sounding boards a ‘changemaker’ could ask for, Vicki and everyone involved in the UNESCO Looking Beyond Disaster Project: your stories inspired this research project. To Jayson Berryhill, your friendship and mentorship during my long stints in Indonesia were invaluable; I hope we have the opportunity to work together again.

My colleagues, particularly Dr Phil Coogan, Kathryn Hodson, Dr Pam O’Connell, Chris Sullivan and Laurayne Tafa: you are leaders in education and social change. I aspire to one day have the same impact and influence as each of you. To my friends in the Asia New Zealand Foundation Leadership Network, thank you for the opportunities, inspiration and support.

To my research colleagues in Indonesia. Without you this thesis would not be possible or complete. Dian Fikriani, Nindyah Rengganis and Siswa Widyatmoko thank you for the hospitality, leadership, and friendship. To each of the teachers who participated in my research, thank you for your time, your inspiration, and your stories. I hope I have served and represented each of you and your communities appropriately. The translation support of Vanessa Hearman at the University of Sydney and Cippy Rusianto in Bogor is also greatly appreciated.

Finally, to my supervisors Dr. Alex McCormick at the University of Sydney and Dr. Arathi Sriprakash at the University of Cambridge. Your leadership, patience and expertise throughout this research process has allowed me to achieve a very personal and purposeful goal. I hope this is the first of many collaborations.
Introduction

Whilst Indonesia has enjoyed relative political stability in recent years, Indonesia’s teachers regularly experience the disruption of policy shifts and the destabilising impact of natural disaster. This thesis explores the influence of frequent policy reform and recurring natural disaster on Indonesian teachers’ professional identity, understandings of their roles, and their practice in local classrooms and communities. Within the global neoliberal recasting of teachers’ work, this research interrogates areas of alignment and dissonance in the way transnational institutions frame teachers’ work and the way teachers describe their work in a context of policy reform and disaster vulnerability.

Aid donors, represented by institutions such as the World Bank, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and United Nations agencies, regularly formulate policy recommendations and influence reforms aligning with dominant neoliberal social and economic paradigms (OECD 2015, World Bank 2013, Robertson 2012). In the case of education, teachers are charged with interpreting policy and performing to global expectations at a local level. Likewise, in a post-disaster setting teachers and systems are exposed to an influx of aid organisations with transnational expertise and associated expectations. To understand this conceptual nexus, qualitative research in Yogyakarta captures and analyses the perspectives and experiences of teachers following the 2006 Yogyakarta earthquake and the implementation of Teacher Law 14/2005. From this analysis, questions are raised about the nature of ‘vulnerability’, the degree to which such conditions are a transnational imposition, and the extent to which transnational institutions overlook social and cultural resources as factors contributing towards a strengths-based discourse of agency and resilience in policy recommendations and post-disaster interventions. This thesis therefore produces a teacher-centred study of how transnational institutions, governments, and NGOs can better represent and support teachers’ work in environments of reform and disaster vulnerability.

Reflecting the purpose of this project, this research has been structured by two interrelated studies.

Study 1 is guided by the following research question:

**RQ 1: How is teachers’ work represented in transnational discourse relating to policy reform and natural disaster?**

In this first study I analyse the ways in which teachers’ work and identity is represented in current transnational policy discourse. In particular, I look at documents representing teachers’ work at a time
of policy reform. A key reform influencing the experiences of Indonesian teachers over the past decade is Teacher Law 14/2005, which relates to teacher professional certification and corresponding remuneration packages. As a means of contextualising World Bank recommendations relating to this reform within the education discourse of transnational institutions, I also deconstruct UNESCO and USAID’s representation and positioning of Indonesian teachers, and the extent to which teachers’ lived experiences are captured in performance related policy recommendations.

Study 2 is guided by two research questions:

**RQ2**: How have teachers responded to the changed expectations resulting from recent education reforms in Indonesia?

**RQ3**: What are teachers’ experiences working in an environment of natural disaster vulnerability and recovery?

For the second question, I capture the ways in which teachers understand the expectations associated with recent education reforms in Indonesia. As a means of evaluating teachers’ awareness of the nexus between transnationally influenced policy reform and natural disasters, and its subsequent impact on their work, I pay particular attention to how teachers articulate their understanding of transnational expectations, and how they describe these expectations in relation to their classroom and community based practice following a natural disaster.

Through my third research question I examine Indonesian teachers’ experiences working in the post-disaster environment of Yogyakarta, the site of a devastating earthquake in 2006 which claimed more than 6000 lives. For the purpose of producing a teacher-centred analysis of how such contexts impact teachers’ understanding of their work this question is driven by teacher narratives. This has enabled a more complex and contextually situated understanding of the dissonant and complementary relationships between neoliberal policy and teachers’ own descriptions of their work, with particular reference to how the incidence of natural disaster antagonises or mollifies this relationship.

Indonesia has a complex history of political reform which has had subsequent effects on education and the work of teachers. Add to this mix contemporary global neoliberal policy shifts and recurring local threats of natural disaster, and conceptually it becomes apparent that the identity and work of the Indonesian teacher is very much on unstable ground.
Significance of the research

The significance of this research is highlighted by two distinct details. Firstly, it is my assessment that policy recommendations on the part of the World Bank, USAID, and UNESCO inadvertently neglect the value and importance of incorporating teachers’ perspectives in policy related research. Secondly, an analysis of internationally produced resources relating to education in emergencies reveals that the full context, culture, and capabilities of teachers at a local level are very rarely taken into account or articulated (Global Education, 2012; Nicholai, 2003; Oreta, 2010; Petal, 2008; UNESCO, 2007, 2010; UNICEF, 2007; Wisner, 2006). This assessment is supported by anthropologist Anthony Oliver-Smith (2015), who states that “disaster research, from pre-event vulnerability through to impact and reconstruction has almost totally ignored the cultural aspects of disaster” (p. 37). Further reinforcing the significance of my approach, Oliver-Smith’s research asserts that neglecting the deep cultural roots of communities’ responses to disaster has left troubling insufficiencies in research and tragic deficiencies in disaster praxis (2015, p. 37).

This project therefore contributes to an underdeveloped body of knowledge on teachers’ experiences relating to how, if at all, transnational discourse is representative of or influenced by the cultural and geographic realities of local contexts. The positioning of this research in Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta, where teachers face the dual vulnerability of externally directed policy reform and recurring disaster risk consequently allows for a more distinct articulation of the complexities teachers navigate when interpreting and enacting the expectations placed upon them.

Approaching this study, my focus was a mapping of the various ‘vulnerabilities’ that disaster and policy reform presents to the work of teachers; hence the title ‘On Unstable Ground’. At a conceptual level (as analysed in chapter 4), readings of transnational policy documents highlight the propagating impact that neoliberal reform has on the nature of teachers’ work in post-disaster contexts. However, as I engaged with teachers in the region I was challenged to think differently about the transnational and neoliberal framing of teachers as ‘vulnerable’, or deficient. Instead, teachers’ narratives supported a more critical identification of how and why transnational discourse overlooks socio-cultural dimensions of resilience. Despite the fact that natural disaster often acts as a catalyst for the introduction of global and neoliberal forces in peripheral communities, these communities are not incapable of resistance, and not without agency in terms of determining their own measures and definitions of their work.
Chapter 1 - Relevant background literature

Education reform in Indonesia

Prior to the fall of President Suharto in 1998 and the transition from a highly centralised to a decentralised education system, there was minimal focus on skills-based educational outcomes in Indonesia’s schools. Instead, value was placed on dimensions relating more closely to civic duty and public order. A teacher under Suharto’s leadership demonstrated competence through the performance of loyalty (kesetian) responsibility (tangung jawab) obedience (ketautan) cooperation (kerjasama) and honesty (kejujuran) (Bjork, 2006, p. 145). Christopher Bjork (2006) shows that as civil servants, teachers in Indonesia answered to government first and foremost, not students or parental boards. As highlighted in Pam Nilan’s (2003) research on teachers’ work in Bali, in policy, practice and public discourse teachers were positioned as transmitters of directives from central superiors rather than representatives of their communities (p. 568). Nilan also points out that whilst teachers were underpaid, they were not undervalued in the community during this time. She writes that despite the reality that “teachers took on other jobs to support themselves, they did not lack commitment to the professional task of teaching” (p. 568). However, the pressure to find improved remuneration often mitigated their capacity to act as agents of change in a rapidly reforming Indonesian state. Further to this, Bjork’s (2004) research also highlights the fact that a teacher who subscribed to state performance criteria had more likelihood of tangible rewards than a teacher with leadership, initiative and a student centred approach.

Due to emerging neoliberal development trends towards the end of the twentieth century (which coincided with the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, the fall of President Suharto, and the intervention of The International Monetary Fund and World Bank) Indonesia set in motion incremental steps towards political decentralisation through the 2003 Education Act (Bandur, 2012). Associated with this transition was an attempt to shift the teacher away from civil servant status towards a more professional definition and identity. One of the most prominent reforms of this era, Teacher Law 14/2005, thus sought to raise the profile of the profession and improve educational outcomes by “providing a much needed incentive for teachers to improve their qualifications and skills and in doing so double their salary” (D. Evans et al, 2009, p. viii). With this policy, Indonesia aimed to fully certify its teacher workforce by 2015, the end of the United Nations’ Education for All decade (Jalal, 2003). In light of the fact that, as of 2006, only 37% of Indonesia’s 2.7 million teachers had any form of formal qualification or certification, there is clear purpose behind the implementation of this policy (D. Evans
et al, 2009). The World Bank shares that this policy mandates the core principle that teaching is a profession (rather than civil service) and further to improving the living standards of teachers, the policy also aims to attract higher calibre graduates to engage in pre-service teacher training (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014).

For reasons symptomatic of the Indonesian education system’s current challenges, a number of researchers have reported in equally critical terms the lack of impact that Teacher Law 14/2005 has achieved. In a 2009 USAID report on teacher professional development, David Evans, Richard Navarro, Martina Nicholls and Sean Tate write that “the demand for teacher training increased dramatically, but beyond this little else changed.” (D. Evans et al, 2009, p. viii). Similarly, two local studies report poor outcomes. Padjadjaran University found that certification has had no impact on student achievement and that the only measurable outcomes have been on teachers’ living standards and remuneration (Mohamad Fahmi, Achmad Maulana, & Yusuf, 2011). Syaril (2013) also reports that there was no clear evidence of impact on student achievement based on the academic upgrading and welfare improvement of teachers.

World Bank and USAID research identifies two key factors negating the success of Teacher Law 14/2005. They report that a poor culture of professional development within the sector and low levels of pedagogical expertise in pre-service and in-service teacher training are major barriers to progress. Mae Chu Chang, Sheldon Shaeffer, Samer Al-Samarrai, Andrew B. Ragatz and Joppe De Ree’s (2014) research for the World Bank also shows that in addition to low levels of professional knowledge and skills, the motivation and effort of Indonesian teachers to engage in their own development is of serious concern (p. 20). Regarding the provision of professional development, Evans et al write that although “teacher educators know their subject matter, they are poor role models in imparting creative and imaginative teaching methodologies” (D. Evans et al, 2009, p. ix).

With respect to the above literature, Indonesian teachers are presented in policy-related documents as being deficient of foundational competencies connected to professional pedagogical practice, which will be further explored in chapter 4. Whilst academic scholarship acknowledges the social, political and economic dynamics influencing current practice, institutional research regularly fails to take into account such factors, instead theorising Indonesian teachers from a deficit perspective. Not surprisingly, there is also very little space for teachers’ voice or agency in such discourse. Thus, given the shifting policy environment of school education in Indonesia and the position from which teachers experience their professionalization, this research presents a timely examination of teachers’ work in
a context of change and an overdue inclusion of teachers’ voices in the representation of their experiences.

**Education in post-disaster contexts**

The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) defines disaster as “a serious disruption in the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, natural, economic and environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources” (Martin, 2010, p. 1358). A specific area in which teachers and schools have a measurable impact on the reduction of life-loss is through the delivery of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) education. Magnus Hagelsteen (2013) writes that DRR “is defined as the process employed to minimise vulnerabilities and disaster risk, and to avoid the adverse impacts of natural hazards” (p. 5). Linking to this, Mary-Laure Martin (2010) reports that programmes in Disaster Risk Reduction “aim to not only improve knowledge of risks, but also lead to effecting a change in children’s and communities’ behaviours” (p. 1367).

The work of teachers in disasters, particularly in terms of their role, skills, and contributions to children and their communities is underrepresented in scholarly discourse. Even within internationally produced resources for distribution in post-disaster contexts there is rarely mention of teachers as leaders or agents of change. Lynn Davies and Christopher Talbot (2008) provide detail on the role of teachers in disaster, writing that historically they reinforced the importance of young people’s return to educational routine. However, they also identify growing advocacy for the abilities of children in disaster risk reduction education, and as a result the demand for teachers to play a more enabling role in community preparedness and recovery processes. Davies and Talbot (2008) also critique the value placed on getting children back to a sense of normalcy, writing “the implication is that it is simply enough to get children back into schools and that the routines of schooling are as important as its content” (p. 513). With similar sentiment, Fumiyo Kagawa (2005) also acknowledges that “creating a sense of normalcy through organised activities is now seen as insufficient” (p. 495).

Davies and Talbot (2008) promote that teachers in such contexts provide young people and their communities with a sense of hope, a means of skills acquisition which provides entry into jobs and “entry into the world of those who are making decisions about their lives” (p. 513). Kagawa (2005) adds to this stating that the skills, attitudes and knowledge required by teachers in such contexts are broad and complex. “Skills include conflict resolution, problem solving, decision making, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence; attitudinal qualities include tolerance, self-respect, self-esteem,
a commitment to justice and equality, bias awareness, and respect for the rights and responsibilities of various stakeholders” (p. 497).

Research on the experiences of teachers in post-disaster in Indonesia is in its infancy. Background reading on the role of teachers (Fikriani 2008, Widyatmoko 2011) in Yogyakarta revealed a limited amount highlighting teachers’ roles as mediators between children, learning and communities. There is also emerging research advocating that Indonesian teachers work in partnership with Western psychologists and humanitarian agencies for improved understanding of the psychosocial needs of Indonesian children. As such, Dian Fikriani’s (2008) research identifies that a teachers’ role is realising that child-led DRR is framed within dialogues between teachers, children and families to interpret children’s voice in the learning process. Referring to psychosocial needs, Siswa Widyatmoko (2011) writes that teachers experience a wide range of symptoms representative of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in their students; ranging from decreased school performance, regressive behaviours, somatic symptoms, and anxiety. Widyatmoko thus believes that teachers provide vital information on child needs and wellbeing. Within a system that is structured and supported they are able to provide relief agencies with analysis of distress levels among children in a culturally informed way. Subsequently, he states that “teachers are a useful resource” and due to “the utility of teachers and the need for larger scale delivery systems for physical and mental health assistance, responders are now partnering with schools” (2011, p. 487).

Beyond these limited case studies, little has been documented about the experiences of teachers working in Indonesia’s numerous post-disaster contexts. We therefore have an incomplete understanding of the roles they take on or the challenges they face. Thus, it is important to construct a more informed body of knowledge around the professional lives of teachers working in disaster affected communities, and gain clarity of how the introduction of new policy – particularly policy relating to teacher performance – impacts their ability to respond to the multifarious and transnational expectations place upon them.

There are multiple dimensions to teachers’ work (i.e. performance, identity, roles and responsibilities, leadership) and a plethora of influences informing how these dimensions are manifest and communicated at policy and classroom levels. For the purposes of this research, these multiple dimensions are brought together through an analytic focus on ‘teachers work’, as described with more detail in the next section.
Teachers’ work and policy contexts

The work of teaching is complex and contested (Connell 2009; Cochran-Smith 2003). Consequently, representations identifying the varied realities of teachers’ working lives requires careful contextual consideration. To present teachers’ work in a singular and definitive fashion defies the extent to which the objectives and outcomes of education systems vary. As stated by Indian educationalist Manabi Mujumdar (2011), “any discussion of teachers needs to take cognisance of the broad context and policy conditions surrounding practice” (p. 35). It is also important to consider that these conditions are never static; teachers’ roles are subject to on-going policy iterations resulting from competing ideologies and shifting priorities which are rarely influenced by teachers themselves. In this regard Mujamdar (2011) writes that “the school system operates within a specific reform climate and remains embedded within a social field of power, which in turn shapes the professional ethos and pedagogic practices embedded by teachers” (p. 35).

With a power balance in favour of global institutions and market orientated agendas, significant attention has been given globalisation’s impact on the work of teachers. Raewyn Connell (2009b) writes that due to its industrial consequences “the process of globalisation has been a mechanism for change in teacher’s work” (p. 11). Seeing schools as incubators for future workers who serve national economies, governments have instigated reforms aimed at achieving market favoured outcomes, arrived at through standardised instruments of student and teacher measurement and performance. In this instance, Cheng and Couture (2000) identify that teachers’ work in a global culture of performance has resulted in a loss of control over work, increased accountability, and standards based tests used to improve teaching. Similarly, Arathi Sriprakash (2011) identifies that bureaucratic systems operating within global agendas position teachers as “functionaries of the state rather than empowered, reflexive professionals” (p. 28).

With the emergence of neoliberal education agendas, “there has been an epithet of new professionalisms” (L. Evans, 2008, p. 21). In a sector traditionally associated with well-established and influential unions and a culture of collectivism, “professionals” is the preferred term to describe contemporary teachers in their work. Judyth Sachs (1999) writes that “teacher professionalism focuses on how teachers take greater self-responsibility for defining the nature and context of their work” (p. 76). Additionally, Eric Hoyle (1975) describes that ‘professionalism’ is often “the strategies and rhetoric employed by members of an occupation seeking to improve status, salary and conditions” (p. 315). In many industrialised contexts high performing teachers are defined as the ‘new entrepreneurs’ in education. These teachers emphasise the professional status of their career, they
are supportive of increased management responsibilities and classroom teachers’ accountability and appraisal, they adopt a pragmatic approach with an eclectic selection of pedagogical ideas and approaches, they emphasise the importance of schooling as a commodity, and they have a high self-profile and see their students as clients (Ghaill, 1992, p. 181).

Susan Robertson (2012) writes that, in an effort to better align pedagogy and educational outcomes with the needs of market economies, a neoliberal shift in education is “orchestrated by global agencies, which argue that there is a key crisis in the teaching profession” (p. 586). As a result, the World Bank, OECD, and Asia Development Bank (to name a few) have begun to symbolise control of the teaching profession internationally (Robertson, 2012, p. 599). Critically, Ghaill also states that neoliberal policy has ushered in “a hegemonic framework … leading to many teachers having a feeling of anomie” in their work (Ghaill, 1992, p. 178). Thus, the conceptual framework guiding this research allows for an analysis of the extent to which this neoliberal shift is having an adverse or constructive impact on Indonesian teachers.

Focusing on discourse, Raewyn Connell (2009b) recognises a concerning increase in the use of neoliberal language representing performance; she writes that terms such as “challenges, goals, stakeholders, partnerships, strategies, commitment and capacity” now construct the teacher as an entrepreneur rather than an educator belonging to a collective (p. 219). In response to rapidly changing employment patterns and new technologies, Connell then posits that teacher professionalism and entrepreneurialism are now used with frequency to also define good teaching (R. Connell, 2009b). With these statements in mind, and reflecting on Sriprakash’s (2011) assertion, that “educational ideas are differently reworked, reinterpreted and re-enacted in local contexts” (p. 9), my conceptual framework allows for a critical understanding of Indonesia’s experience navigating and reframing global definitions and norms to be developed.

With the fundamental recasting of teachers work globally, this research focuses on how destabilising trends are navigated in a post-disaster context. Does this context amplify the vulnerability and challenges teachers’ experience? Or do teachers appropriate the context in favour of increased personal leadership and educational opportunities for students? In summary, this background literature calls for a more complex and socioculturally situated understanding of teachers’ work in contexts of disaster vulnerability and policy reform. Conceptually, this requires a research approach that encourages multiple ways of knowing teachers’ work and how teachers reconstitute understandings of their roles in such settings.
Chapter 2 - Theoretical framework

A core objective of this research is to understand teachers’ lived experiences working in a context of policy reform and disaster vulnerability. As analysed in chapter 4, teachers’ work is often defined by transnational institutional actors living and operating far beyond the conceptual or professional borders of the teachers they represent (World Bank 2014, UNESCO 2015, USAID 2009, OECD 2015). Thus, this research provides space for the framing of locally generated descriptions of teachers’ work against transnational constructions. It provides an opportunity for the comparison of global representations against teachers’ own narratives and the interrogation of these comparisons for discrepancies or distortions.

To understand the positioning of teachers in the production of texts describing and defining teachers’ work, I use globalisation theory and the critical discourse analytical tool of intertextuality to frame and contextualise representations of teachers’ work in contexts of policy reform and disaster vulnerability (Alfaro 1996, Blommaert 2000, Porter 1986). I want to capture how dominant transnational discourses can both represent and reinforce the power dynamics of globalisation, and how they claim a form of ownership over teachers’ identities, experiences, and work at a global level. By using globalisation theory alongside intertextuality, I locate teachers’ experiences in transnational texts, construct knowledge of the forces shaping the way in which teachers’ experiences are present or absent, and how teachers’ work is consequently positioned. In describing globalisation theory, it is important to first examine definitions of globalisation and then consider how a critical lens develops a nuanced approach to evaluating the various dynamics that globalisation influences.

Globalisation theory

Theorists frame globalisation through a range of social and economic indicators representing the tendencies and outcomes of transnational practices. Chandan Sengupta (2001) writes that “transnational practices are those that cross state boundaries but do not necessarily originate at the level of the state” (p. 3138). This has created new markets with new players who define new global rules and norms, i.e. the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Multi-National Corporations (MNCs), the World Bank, and OECD (Sengupta, 2001).

The reform context this research investigates is highly exposed to transnational forces and power dynamics which assert authority over the work of local teachers. As Frans Schuurman (2009) writes,
those with power “consist of an amalgam of actors, among which are supra-national organisations such as multi-national companies and NGOs” (p. 846). Education reform in emerging economies is driven by the recommendations of actors like the World Bank, or informed by OECD moderated global examinations such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Likewise, particularly in the developing world, disaster response and recovery operations are governed by a host of multi-lateral agencies and international NGO’s alongside local government and civil society organisations. In these cases, international entities hold a symbolic and practical balance of power. Highlighting the complexity of these dynamics, Schuurman (2009) also points out that political economists view local NGO’s in these contexts “as instruments; often times unwittingly, and unknowingly; of outside interests and regard economic development and democracy as a mask of hidden agendas to impose policy and global institutional frameworks on the new world order” (p. 485). It is this reality that demands a sound theoretical framework through which the dynamics experienced by teachers can be understood and articulated.

This research locates where Indonesian teachers stand within this power balance; I therefore need to understand the extent to which teachers self-identify their positionality in a globalised world. David Held (1999) characterises globalisation as “resulting in greater pragmatism and stratification in which some states, societies and communities are becoming increasingly enmeshed in the global order, while others are increasingly marginalised” (cited in Tikly, 2001, p. 155). In this respect, I am interested in whether or not teachers see the influence of global institutions as an inclusive or excluding process, or one that progresses or constrains their work. Relating to this research context, Leon Tikly (2001) writes that an increasing feature of a globalised world has been the “undermining of the work of the state in managing crisis”, in that global multilateral agencies and NGOs now step in to take the lead (p. 154). Given Yogyakarta’s history of disaster, this presents a visceral example of globalisation’s potential influence on the work of local teachers.

By looking at the work of teachers in Yogyakarta through the theoretical lens of globalisation, it is worth considering the geographic and social scope that globalisation represents. I.e. how does research facilitated by New York, Paris, or Washington DC based institutions connect with and influence the experiences of teachers in periphery contexts? David Held and Andrew McGraw (2006) provide the perspective that “globalisation denotes the expanding scale, growing magnitude, speeding up and deepening impact of inter-regional flows and patterns of social interaction. It refers to a shift or transformation in the scale of human social organisation that links distant communities and expands the reach of power relations across the world” (cited in Hayden, 2006, p. 14). Key to this research are the ways in which these processes are experienced over time at a local and individual
level. As Jevdet Rexhepi’s (2011) research shows, globalisation is “an accumulation of phenomena extended in many forms across decades, at once contradictory and thus variably experienced and perceived” (p. 684).

Globalisation theory is operationalised in two distinct ways through this research. Firstly, Yogyakarta is located at the global economic periphery (Sengupta, 2001, p. 3138); yet the advent of natural disaster activates and ushers in processes and ideologies of globalisation. Through my analysis we understand that the neoliberal influences impacting teachers’ work in the post-disaster context are the result of natural forces beyond the economic and political realm. Globalisation theory therefore presents a further conceptual nexus in which these forces catalyse and proliferate neoliberal influences through the interactions implicit in the aid industry influx following a disaster.

Secondly, globalisation theory allows us to frame and interrogate teachers’ work as it relates to the way education is both a product and tool of globalisation, with teachers being its unknowing or indifferent agents. As Tikly (2001) points out, “globalisation works both in and through education policy. I.e. not only is education effected by globalisation but it has also become a principal mechanism by which global forces effect the daily lives of populations” (p. 155). In this instance, globalisation theory is operationalised by showing that globalisation can have a paradoxical effect on teachers and their work. Post-disaster, teachers can be adversely impacted by globalisation and at the same time the very agents determining the extent to which global neoliberal norms and expectations set root in their communities.

**Intertextuality**

The second tool informing my theoretical framework is intertextuality. Often referred to as a literary device as well as a theoretical tool (Allen, 2000; Ott, 2000) intertextuality has its roots in critical discourse analysis. It aids my ability to evaluate and define the power dynamics present in transnational texts. Intertextuality is particularly pertinent to globalisation and the analysis of power due to the paradigmatic relationship between text and power; notably Maria Alfaro channels a Foucauldian explanation by insisting that we “analyse the role of power in the production of textuality and textuality in the production of power” (Alfaro, 1996, p. 282). Expanding on this Schirato and Webb (2003) theorise that “globalisation functions as a set of texts, ideas, goals, values, narratives, and dispositions”, which they claim are “filled and inflected with the interests of those who have access to it” (cited in Hayden, 2006, p. 13).
As I will be evaluating multiple transnational texts for how teachers’ work is represented, a theory of intertextuality allows me to investigate the ways in which global education discourse includes or marginalises teachers’ experiences at a local level. In presenting how intertextuality will develop my understanding of teacher’s work in a context of policy reform and disaster vulnerability, I explore how the theory allows me to derive meaning across texts, understand how power is implicit in the production of transnational resources, and recognise how a culture of discourse is present across institutions and their focus areas.

Intertextuality is presented in two particular ways: the examination of relationships and the creation of meaning between texts, as well as the understanding of the connectedness between texts and social realities. Discussion of how texts exist dialectically with other texts to make social meaning is supported by J.L. Lemke (2004), who writes that “every text, the discourse of every occasion, makes its social meanings against the backdrops of other texts, other discourses, and other occasions” and that no text is “an autonomous or unified object, but a set of relations with other texts” (p. 3). He also states that “every discourse is composed of traces, pieces of other texts that help constitute its meaning” (Lemke, 2004). Alfaro’s (1996) thinking expands on this, writing that “intertextuality requires that we understand texts not as self-contained systems, but as the differential and the historical, as traces and tracings of otherness since they are shaped by the repetition and transformation of other textual structures” (p. 268).

Texts are a representation of social contexts and realities. As Blommaert (2000) promotes, we are looking for communication patterns in an attempt to account for the relationship between linguistic practice and social structure. By examining these relationships alongside text produced through qualitative research, we are able to analyse misrepresentations of teachers’ work in a developing country or post-disaster context, and explore how such texts are inclusive or exclusive regarding representations of teachers’ work. Contained in these texts and activities are structures of power and the associated outcomes of power. In this sense, intertextuality allows us to understand the structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, and control as manifest in language and reproduced in society (Blommaert, 2000, p. 443).

In the same way that the texts and resources produced by transnational institutions are developed for and representative of communities in the ‘developing world’, they are also produced by a specific community in the ‘developed world’. James Porter (1986) refers to the producers of texts as belonging to various discourse communities. These communities have their own rules and norms, and he writes that “a text is acceptable within a community insofar as it represents the community episteme” (p.
The discourse community this research interrogates is represented by the institutions influencing reform in the Indonesian education context. Within this discourse community the quality of a text is measured by “the writer’s ability to know what can be presupposed and to borrow that community’s traces effectively to create a text that contributes to the definition of that community” (p. 43). In this regard, it is apparent that transnational institutions adhere more strongly to their own ideologies, standards, and norms than the realities of the contexts they write for. As Alfaro (1996) suggests, “texts are subliminal purveyors of ideology” and as such, they influence and alter the way an audience understands a subject (p. 268). It is therefore important to read the discourse analysis presented in chapter 4 with this lens: that evaluations of teachers’ work and recommendations for reform are more representative of a community’s episteme in a neoliberal and transnational culture than the locally understood and valued outcomes of teachers’ practice.
Chapter 3 - Research design and methodology

This research locates qualitative data that informs underdeveloped academic and policy-level understandings of teachers’ subjectivities in the midst of educational change and disaster vulnerability. By conducting two interrelated studies investigating representations of teachers’ work in transnational policy discourse, and examining the narratives of teachers in disaster vulnerable contexts, my research interrogates the incongruences and tensions between institutional expectations of teachers work and locally experienced realities.

Figure 1 (page 19) depicts the multi-study design of my research, how each research question has been approached, and the outcomes that this research produces.
Teachers' work in a context of policy reform and disaster vulnerability in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

A sociological study of Indonesian teachers’ experiences working in a context of policy reform and disaster vulnerability.

**Study 1: Policy analysis**
RQ 1: How is teachers’ work represented in international discourse relating to contexts of policy reform and natural disaster?

**Study 2a: Teachers’ work**
RQ 2: How have teachers responded to the changed expectations resulting from recent education reforms in Indonesia?

**Study 2b: Teachers’ work**
RQ 3: What are teachers’ experiences working in an environment of natural disaster vulnerability or recovery?

**Research methodology**
RQ 1: Critical discourse analysis/intertextuality
A selection of documents including global research, best practice guidelines, and policy recommendations relating to education reform and disaster.

**Research methodology**
RQ 2: Focus group interview
1 x focus group of 7 teachers (3x male, 4x female)
RQ 3: Life story interviews
7 x individual interviews (participants from focus group)

**Outcome:** This research informs a teacher-centred analysis of how transnational agencies can better understand and enhance teachers’ capacity to work effectively in an environment of reform and post-disaster vulnerability.

Figure 1: Research design and methodology
Conceptual approach

Literature on teachers’ work, education in Indonesia, and education in post-disaster contexts (addressed in chapter 1) informs the conceptual approach of this study. That is, this project examines how teachers, as socially and culturally located actors, are constructing narratives of their work in a post-disaster setting, and how neoliberal agendas and associated policy reform influence corresponding narratives of teachers work at such times.

This research also establishes how teachers are situated in policy-related discourse on teachers work, as well as how teachers construct new meanings and practices in response to their experiences in post-disaster contexts. Subsequently, a qualitative sociological approach has been employed. This informs a teacher-centred analysis of how governments and NGO’s can enhance teachers’ capacity to work effectively in an environment of reform and disaster vulnerability. Therefore, to arrive at a comprehensive and appropriately complex understanding of my research questions, relevant policy discourse is analysed in terms of how teachers work is positioned and represented at a transnational level. Teachers’ local experiences and constructions of new meanings and practices are then documented and presented in a way that gives authenticity, authority, and currency to their voice and practice at both a local and global level. Conceptually, this is illustrated in figure 2 below:

![Figure 2: Conceptual Framework: On unstable ground](image)
Research methodology

The choice of Indonesia as a research site is based on two key factors:

1) Indonesia is one of the world’s most disaster vulnerable countries; positioned at the western-most arch of the ‘Pacific Ring of Fire’ Indonesia experiences multiple earthquakes and volcanic eruptions annually.

2) Since the decentralisation of Indonesia’s education system in 1998, Indonesia has implemented numerous policy reforms aimed at improving the performance of teachers and educational outcomes of students.

Qualitative research took place in Yogyakarta, a city of four hundred thousand and built upon centuries of spiritual and intellectual tradition. Overlooking the city is the volatile 3000m Gunung Merapi which erupted with serious consequence as recently as 2010. Beneath the city the Indo-
Australian and Eurasian tectonic plates collide, resulting in regular and often severe earthquakes. The most recent - a 6.3 in magnitude - occurred on May the 27th 2006 and claimed the lives of more than 6000 residents (Zaumseil, Schwarz, von Vacano, Sullivan, & Prawitasari-Hadiyono, 2013). As can be seen in the photo of a school’s evacuation assembly point in Figure 3 above, and the photo of Gunung Merapi below, much of the city’s physical landscape captures the reality of recurring natural disaster and the imminent threats they pose.

![Figure 4: The Code River with Mt Merapi in the background, Yogyakarta. Credit: Chris Henderson](image)

Figures 5 and 6 illustrate where in Indonesia Yogyakarta and Bantul Regency are located. As can be seen in Figure 6, Bantul Regency lies to the the south of Yogyakarta city and close to the coast. As described in chapter 5, this proximity to the coast presented an additional threat at the time of the
earthquake due to tsunami risk. Gunung Merapi, as shown in figure 4, is located on the northern border of the city.

Figure 5: Location of Bantul Regency in Indonesia. Google Maps.

Figure 6: Bantul Regency. Google maps.
Research conduct

In Bantul Regency I interviewed teachers working at the Sekolah Dasar (SD) or primary school level. Teachers working at the SD level work with children between the ages of six and eleven. I focus on SD teachers for two reasons: firstly, these are the years of compulsory schooling in Indonesia, and therefore a greater cross section of Yogyakarta’s children and communities are directly associated with a Sekolah Dasar. Secondly, this cohort of teachers have the lowest rate of teacher certification in the country; 65% of Indonesia’s SD teachers are unqualified and therefore this cohort has a stronger awareness of Teacher Law 14/2005 and its influence on teachers’ professional practice (World Bank, 2009).

For my fieldwork component (RQ2 and RQ3), I restricted my second question’s focus group interviews to seven teachers in total (three male, four female). These teachers were used for my second question’s focus group interviews and the individual life story interviews, which concentrate on the third research question. As a means of ensuring that all teachers had experienced the impact of disaster on their working lives, schools that had documented evidence of the impact caused by the 2006 earthquake were located. The participating teachers met the following criteria:

- a) They had worked as a teacher in Yogyakarta since 2006
- b) They had been working as a teacher during the time of the 2006 earthquakes
- c) They had interacted with or had the support of NGOs (local or international) during the time of the 2006 earthquakes
- d) They had participated in initiatives relating to education policy reform or had experienced the impact of education policy reform in their classroom

Alongside the above criteria, a distribution of age, gender, and experience was also considered during the selection process. The following volunteers were thus selected to participate in the focus group and life story interviews:
### The in-country data collection process

Between February and July 2015 I made three preparatory visits to Yogyakarta. The collection of data took place during a two week period in August 2015. These visits served four purposes:

- Learn about the geographic and cultural context of the region
- Develop relationships with key academic support people
- Locate appropriate research assistants to support the recruitment of research participants
- Understand how this context tied into the policy documents used for my critical discourse analysis

In the first visit I sought local insight regarding where the earthquake’s most severe impact had been. As it had been nine years since the earthquake online resources were limited. In terms of understanding which schools had been adversely affected in terms of causalities and loss of infrastructure I ventured out into communities to inquire where the best place to situate my research would be. After exploring Yogyakarta and surrounding districts, I developed a catalogue of the most appropriate locations and which schools I needed to target.

In terms of developing relationships with key academic support people, prior contact had been made with local researchers and academic staff who had supported international NGOs and academics in the aftermath of the 2006 earthquake. During this first visit I met with potential collaborators,

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<th>Name*:</th>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Gender:</th>
<th>School*:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wawan</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>Sekolah Dasar Grogol</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Sekolah Dasar Tanah Abang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daris</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Sekolah Dasar Tanah Abang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rita</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atun</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sekolah Dasar Kuningan</td>
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* Names and schools have been changed to protect the participants’ identities.

Table 1: Participating teachers from schools in Bantul Regency.
discussed the objectives of my research, and sought corresponding support. Pak Siswa Widyatmoko, a professor in Psychology at Universitas Sanata Dharma, and Ibu Dian Fikiriani, a researcher and consultant with UNICEF Indonesia, developed a shared vision for an approach that would contribute towards the achievement of my objectives. As such, both were recruited to provide in-country support and expertise. Importantly, they also provided vital support in locating and recruiting volunteers for focus group and life story interviews.

During the second and third visits I worked with Pak Siswa and Ibu Dian to develop appropriate protocols and processes for the recruitment of volunteers. A proportion of this time was committed to resolving understandings of research ethics and aligning recruitment methods with ethical best practice. Alongside a poster that was distributed to primary schools in the Bantul region (see Appendix 3), Pak Siswa advised a number of contextually appropriate recruitment methods. One such example was working through senior community members to endorse my research and guarantee participants that I was a professional, locally experienced, and credible researcher. This had a subsequent positive impact on teachers’ confidence and willingness to work with this project.

Methodology

I have employed three key methods of qualitative research which have origins in linguistics, sociology, and anthropology respectively: critical discourse analysis, focus group interviews, and life story interviews.

Through this research I sought a holistic understanding of complex realities and processes, where the questions and hypothesis emerged as the investigation progressed (Mayoux, 2006, p. 118). In developing a complex understanding of teachers’ lived realities in a context of policy reform and disaster vulnerability, “potentially competing subjectivities in terms of different accounts of facts, different meanings, and different perspectives” have been deconstructed; and through this process dominant themes, recurring patterns, and narratives of functional significance have been captured (Mayoux, 2006, p. 118). Furthermore, the process was participatory in that it gave space and voice to teachers who are commonly marginalised in policy formation and decision making.

In this setting it was critical that the process reflected terms and conditions participants could comfortably subscribe to, and that I was critically aware of the cultural and social implications of my role as a researcher. In exploring narratives of teachers’ experiences, Anne Ryen (2001) states that social reality and how we talk about reality are intertwined. She writes that reality often varies
“according to the context of its articulation, and this by implication presents a challenge especially for cross-cultural, interview research” (p. 14). Also, an influential consideration was that “cross-cultural differences in expectations of linguistic behaviour, interpretative strategies, and signalling devices can lead to breakdowns in interethnic communication” (Ryen, 2001, p. 14).

As a means of navigating such issues, a Javanese form of interviewing was employed in both individual life story and focus-group interview settings. The Javanese term ngobrol-ngobrol refers to a style of conversation or information sharing that is at once informal, fluid, and colloquial, whilst at the same time able to focus on specific issues and resolutions. Participants were informed that our conversations would be ‘ngobrol-ngobrol’ and as the cultural proprietors of this process they governed the scope of resulting conversations. Whilst I have not sourced contemporary research on ngobrol-ngobrol as an indigenous interview methodology, I drew guidance from Koya’s (2013) research on Talanoa as an informal means of interviewing in Samoa, Tonga and Fiji indigenous contexts (Nabobo-Baba, 2006; ‘Otunuku, 2011; Vaioleti, 2006, 2010). Koya writes that Talanoa has been subscribed to by many Pacific researchers as an effective method of gathering narrative data in a ‘comfortable, nonthreatening manner’ (Koya 2013, p. 141).

Study 1. Policy analysis - Critical discourse analysis

**Research Question 1:** How is teachers’ work represented in international discourse relating to contexts of policy reform and natural disaster?

For the analysis of transnational texts representing teachers’ work in contexts of policy reform and disaster vulnerability Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was used. I capture language and frames of reference representing the institutional and cultural positioning of teachers’ work and their professional identity globally and in Indonesia. As Marianne Jorgenson (2002) presents, CDA provides methods for the study of relations between discourse and cultural developments in different social domains. For the purposes of this study, and the need to deconstruct how global neo-liberal policy is ingrained in Indonesia’s reform and the experiences of teachers, Ruth Wodak’s (2006) description of CDA illustrates its value. She writes that “the purpose of CDA is to analyse opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language” (p. 4). Similarly, as a tool for policy and institutional texts, Rebecca Rogers (2004) states that CDA “pushes beyond issues of form and function in language to a deeper understanding of how specific texts, discourses and social practices affect social arrangements” (p. xvi).
I investigate the extent to which transnational discourse is manifest in teachers’ understanding of their professional role and the influence this has on narratives of their work. Rogers (2005) states that discourse “is a system of meanings or systematically organised statements which give meaning and expression to the meanings and values of an institution” (p. 5). Beyond text discourse is - and is intertwined with - social practice. According to Gavin Melles (2005), in discourse analysis “the concern is with the talk and texts as part of social practice” (p. 22). Or, as Jorgenson (2002) further theorises, “discourse is a form of social practice which both constitutes the social world and is constituted by other social practices” (p. 61).

I employ CDA to catalogue and analyse the language that transnational institutions use to describe and position Indonesian teachers’ work against global norms and expectations. In chapter 4 I describe the texts that have been selected for critical analysis and the criteria used to select these texts. A broader overview and synopsis of each text is also provided in Appendix 2.

Study 2a. Teachers’ work - Focus group interviews

Research Question: How have teachers responded to the changed expectations resulting from recent education reforms in Indonesia?

In Yogyakarta I used two distinct approaches for my interviewing of teachers. For the first research question, I capture a collective professional and socio-cultural framing of how teachers understand the impact of recent policy reforms on their work. In this respect, the focus group methodology was highly appropriate. As Lloyd-Evans (2006) writes, “individual behaviour is influenced by collective behaviour and thought”, and focus groups provide an ideal environment for “understanding collective social action, and accessing group beliefs, understandings, behaviours and attitudes” (Lloyd Evans, 2006, p. 154). In using the focus group, and an ngobrol-ngobrol methodology, I elicited a collective perspective in a collegial and culturally appropriate setting. This was important, as reported by David Morgan (2001) “when the participants in a focus group have a high level of personal commitment or emotional involvement with the topic, it is easier for them to start and maintain a discussion” (Morgan, 2001, p. 148).

As my first study investigates institutional discourse and unpacks the inherent power dynamics present in transnational discourse, the focus group approach is intended to allow teachers to contribute their own interpretations to policy analysis, ascribed roles, and associated identity. As Carol Warren (2001) describes, interview participants are more likely to be viewed as meaning makers, not
passive conduits for retrieving information from an existing vessel of answers in a focus group setting (p. 83). Extrapolating this, James Spradley (1979) explains that the purpose of interviewing is to make ‘cultural inferences’, thick descriptions of a given social world analysed for cultural patterns and themes (p. 8). In more simple terms Spradley also suggests that “qualitative researchers make cultural inferences from three sources: what people say, the ways they act, and the artefacts they use” (p. 8).

In this study I cross analyse these local and collective narratives with transnational discourse; I examine the extent to which there is a destabilising tension between institutionally ascribed ‘professionalisms’, locally determined identities, and the self-described realities of teachers’ work.

**Study 2b. Teachers’ work - Life story interviews**

**Research Question:** What are teachers’ experiences working in an environment of reform and natural disaster vulnerability or recovery?

I seek to understand individual attitudes and interpretations regarding the role teachers take in a so-called emergency setting. The methodology I use is the individual life story interview. Similar to the focus group, the life story interview is an important participatory tool. Robert Atkinson (2001) writes that “the stories we tell of our lives bring order to our experiences and help us to view our lives both subjectively and objectively while at the same time assisting us in forming our identities” (p. 122). Furthermore, Lewis (2008) states that life story interviewing “may provide a more nuanced or textual view of people’s past or present experience … which can help with illustrating the ways in which individual, political and cultural identities link with wider history and politics” (p. 126).

Based on his research with Tamil teachers in Sri Lanka, David Hayes (2010) posits that life story research provides evidence to show how individuals negotiate their identities and consequently their experiences and make sense of the rules and roles of the social world in which they live (pp. 58-83). In addition, the life story method supports participants “to reveal their lives, deep thoughts, and beliefs in an atmosphere of honesty, sympathy and respect” (Melles, 2005, p. 21). It “also brings the researcher into the same emotional and social space as the story teller, thereby narrowing the power gap between the interviewee and the researcher” (Kakuru & Paradza, 2007, p. 289).

Taking the above points into consideration, the same participants took part in life story interviews as were involved in the focus groups. As well as using Bahasa Indonesia as my interview language, I established a productive and trusting rapport with the participants. Despite the small cohort, this
methodology provided sufficient material to generate illustrative narratives regarding teachers work in disaster contexts.

Factors influencing my subjectivity as a researcher

Before progressing to chapters 4 and 5, where transnational and local discourse is deconstructed and critically analysed, it is important to provide a reflexive description of my positionality as a researcher. These factors determine my own subjectivities, affects the nature of my work with research participants, and influences my own interpretations of discourse. I have worked in Indonesia intermittently for five years and speak Bahasa Indonesia. I thus conducted the interviews presented in this thesis in Bahasa Indonesia with the support of Pak Siswa Widyatmoko. Further to this, I am an international development consultant and my clients include governments, private sector funders, and United Nations agencies. My work in this context is regularly informed by research produced by the OECD and World Bank and I am thus inadvertently a part of the transnational discourse community critiqued in my theoretical framework (chapter 2).

Finally, I am a former teacher and survivor of a major natural disaster; in 2011 I was working in Christchurch, New Zealand. During the school day a 6.1 magnitude earthquake struck the city, killing 189 people and destroying the central business district. I lived and worked as a teacher and community volunteer in this post-disaster context for 12 months. Participants were made aware of these above facts prior to the commencement of interviews.
Chapter 4 - Discourse analysis of transnational policy documentation

Introduction

Research question 1: How is teachers’ work represented in international discourse relating to contexts of policy reform and natural disaster?

In this section, the ways in which teachers’ work is constituted in international discourse relating to education reform and disaster is deconstructed and interpreted. This informs a teacher-centred analysis of how transnational institutions can better understand and enhance teachers’ capacity to work effectively in an environment of reform and post-disaster vulnerability. How teachers as professionals are represented through the publications of international institutions is a particular focus. Of further interest is the extent to which the ideologies and corresponding discourse of transnational actors informs how teachers understand their work and identity at a local level. Specifically, I present analysis of the extent to which global neoliberal ideologies are ingrained in Indonesia’s reform policies and teachers’ experiences working in a post-disaster context.

I investigate language and frames of reference that represent an institutional and cultural positioning of teachers’ work. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides methods for the study of the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains (Jorgenson, 2002). Thus, seven key documents have been selected as samples representing global conceptualisations and discourse relating to teachers and their work in contexts of reform and disaster vulnerability. This includes four documents representing the role of teachers in contexts of disaster vulnerability, and three documents representing teachers’ work in contexts of education reform.¹

Teachers’ work in post-disaster or emergency contexts:


¹ See Appendix 1 for descriptions of each document’s origin, design, and purpose
² Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
Across all documents I categorise material relating to teachers’ work into a concise group of emerging themes and corresponding narratives. The purpose of this intertextual analysis is to create an understanding of how teachers’ work is constituted at a global level and how this plays out both theoretically and in practice at a local level. At the end of the chapter I provide a brief comparison of texts from both focus areas to elicit the extent to which neoliberal configurations influence or define teachers’ work. For a concise overview of the themes and sub-themes presented across all transnational texts see Appendix 2.

**Globally focused discourse on teachers’ work in post-disaster contexts**

*Theme 1: Schools play a complex role in disaster contexts*

To understand the expectations placed on teachers in a post-disaster context, it is important to first understand the role of schools and the education system as a whole. Following is an analysis of the emerging sub-themes regarding the position of the education sector in a disaster or emergency setting.

One of the first sub-themes that appears is the contested social, political and economic environments that teachers work in post-disaster. In a majority of cases, disaster represents a radical shift in teachers
working conditions. As written by Mary Burns and James Lawrie (2015) in the INEE’s publication *Where It’s Needed Most: Quality Professional Development for All Teachers*, teachers in poor, ostensibly ‘non-fragile’ countries or regions can be thrust into fragility through natural disasters such as earthquakes, cyclones or tsunamis (p. 20). Considering teachers’ work and their ability to perform or lead in such settings, it is important to understand that this context of ‘fragility’ has adverse impacts on the quality of education and learning that students receive (Burns & Lawrie, 2015, p. 25).

Similarly, the INEE Minimum Standards document conveys that it is vital to understand ‘fragility’ as multi-dimensional, imposing multiple barriers to quality education and impacting teachers differently across different contexts (INEE, 2010). However, the Minimum Standards document also communicates that a common outcome is the impact that fragility has on teacher well-being, teacher performance, and the availability and quality of professional learning that teachers receive. Unfortunately, this document also identifies that in too many internationally initiated projects teacher wellbeing is overlooked, and a consequent lack of ‘performance’ means that teachers are blamed for the inadequate training and preparation that they have received to cope with the post-disaster conditions. Burns and Lawrie (2015) expand on this, stating that teachers are regularly “blamed for not implementing what they should have learned in professional development, despite that fact that in many developing country contexts professional development is often irrelevant, not focused on their problems of practice, and offers little to no practical support” (p. 147).

When disaster strikes, parts of the world that might have been relatively isolated from globalisation are thrust into situations where power is redistributed and decisions are negotiated by local government and international humanitarian agencies. As the INEE standards identify, those who work with teachers – decision makers, NGO staff, and educational planners – often internalize a lack of understanding and respect for teachers (Burns & Lawrie, 2015, p. 41). This is made all the more problematic by the fact that teachers who hold positions of influence within their own communities are subject to training facilitated by international aid workers, based upon ‘global best practice’ with little regard for cultural norms or what works best in the local education system.

Often, the INEE guidelines state, those who work as international “trainers” have no teaching experience; have no formal training or education themselves as teacher educators; lack teaching experience in the environment from which the teachers they are instructing come; and may be unfamiliar with the culture, conditions and language of the country in which they are now conducting professional development (Burns & Lawrie, 2015, p. 105). INNE thus urges the mitigation of these potential shortfalls, recommending that educational planners and implementers focus on teachers
as professionals, as individuals, as members of a community, and as people coping with the effects of crisis and fragility (Burns & Lawrie, 2015, p. 39).

One of the core functions described in the selected texts is that of risk mitigation (Burns & Lawrie, 2015; INEE 2010; UNISDR 2007; UNICEF 2006) The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) states under ‘Priority for Action 3’ that schools need to use “knowledge, innovation, and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels” (UNISDR, 2007, p. v). Supporting this, the INEE Minimum Standards insist that schools are responsible for building a culture of safety and resilience through “teaching about hazards, promoting schools as centres for community disaster risk reduction, and empowering children and youth as leaders in disaster prevention” (INEE, 2010). Another way of looking at this role is presented by UNISDR, who advocate that teachers should “serve as vehicles for building a culture of prevention” (UNISDR, 2007, p. 1).

With the future and risk mitigation in focus, INEE’s Minimum Standards document promotes that schools can “mitigate the psychosocial impact of disasters by providing a sense of routine, stability, structure and hope” (2010, p. 2). They encourage teachers to achieve this by “strengthening problem-solving and coping skills” so that their learners are better able to make “informed decisions about how to survive and care for themselves and others in dangerous environments” (INEE, 2010, p. 2).

Across all of the documents schooling is recognized as a ‘symbol of normalcy’ as it provides the kind of everyday routines around which a wider social stability can be promoted (Burns & Lawrie, 2015; INEE 2010; UNISDR 2007; UNICEF 2006). Schooling contributes significantly to overcoming the psychological and other forms of distress that many will have experienced (UNICEF, 2006). On such occasions, UNICEF states that schools and teachers are able to give “shape and structure to children’s lives and can instil community values, promote justice and respect for human rights and enhance peace, stability and interdependence” (UNICEF, 2006, p. 18). INEE supports this notion, writing that schools play a crucial role in helping affected people cope with their situation and establish normality in their lives” (INEE, 2010). Being able to attend school “ensures dignity and sustains life by offering safe spaces for learning, where children and youth who need other assistance can be identified and supported” (p. 2). Adding to this, the document also states that a prompt return to the classroom can “provide life-saving knowledge and skills for survival” (INEE, 2010, p. 2).

The post-disaster context is a space wherein norms are disrupted, the status quo is contested, and the classroom becomes ad hoc or informal depending on the functionality of the school and teachers. Even though ‘best-practice’ recommendations suggest that the role of the school in such settings is to construct the nearest sense of normalcy and routine possible for psychosocial reasons, it can also be
a time for collaborative leadership between teachers, learners, authorities and communities. In fact, in this context teachers have the ability to establish new possibilities regarding the modes of classroom learning they facilitate. Although the role of teachers is not specifically defined by the INEE, this belief is shared in the Minimum Standards document. It states that crises can offer an opportunity for national and international stakeholders “to work together for social transformation by creating more equitable educational systems and structures” (INEE, 2010). INEE also advocates that a diverse range of quality education opportunities are necessary at this time.

At a national level, the aim of teaching and learning in emergencies should be “to ensure that the educational needs of all learners are met, and that a contribution to the economic, social and political development of the country is made” (INEE, 2010, p. 00). Positively, especially in developing country contexts, teachers and schools are often recognized as the heart of the community and symbolise significant opportunity for future generations and hope for a better life (INEE, 2010).

The above analysis illustrates that schooling is broadly seen as a frontline priority in a post disaster context. The themes highlight the critical importance of education in a community or country’s recovery and future resilience. However, at the macro level, teachers are rarely discussed and yet they are charged with interpreting and activating above mentioned priorities locally. Therefore, the following section describes and analyses the nature of the transnational expectations placed upon teachers at a global level.

*Theme 2: High expectations are placed upon teachers in a disaster context*

Burns and Lawrie (2015) write that teachers play a critical role in shaping the future of their students. “Their role should not be an afterthought but should be an integral part of the preparedness and planning phases for education in emergencies” (p. 07). All publications advocate that, through children, key disaster preparedness and risk reduction messages can be disseminated to the community. The logic for this is based on current need and opportunity, but also a future focus as highlighted by UNISDR (2007) who write that, “teaching disaster risk reduction to the children of today is capacitating a generation of adults to address disasters more effectively tomorrow” (p. 67). However, this is an area where agencies see teachers as lacking in skill and initiative. Highlighted by UNISDR (2007), they state that “providing teachers with information and procedures is not sufficient as they may, for example, follow evacuation procedures inadequately, or simply not follow them at
all out of fear of doing something wrong” (p. 19). It is acknowledged, however, that teachers are “very enthusiastic about participating in high-quality training.” (UNISDR, 2007, p. 19)

UNISDR have several examples which illustrate the importance of the teachers’ role in this regard. In Vietnam it is reported that trained primary school teachers “teach several generations of school students, and trained children could disseminate messages on what ought to be done or avoided before, during and after a disaster event to their parents, relatives, neighbours and friends” (UNISDR, 2007, p. 112). Teachers developed expertise in disaster preparedness perceptions, causes and effects of hazards and disasters, disaster preparedness methods, new teaching methodologies, class organization and lesson preparation. They also developed effective ways to encourage children to share their knowledge with their parents, relatives, neighbours and friends (UNISDR, 2007).

In the post-disaster scenario teachers are seen as being central to the safety and wellbeing of children and communities. As the INEE (2010) document presents, Teachers and other education personnel provide for the education needs of children and youth in emergencies (p. 65). The following sub-themes highlight the importance of this role; also, the complexities and perceived deficiencies of teachers’ work in a post disaster setting are described. Overall, teachers are portrayed as having an important impact on child and community wellbeing, but there is little confidence or recognition of teachers’ existing knowledge and capabilities to lead this work.

In light of the importance of teachers’ work in emergencies, all publications analysed acknowledge the insurmountable difficulties that teachers face in fulfilling the basics of their role. UNICEF (2006) identifies that, “qualified teachers are often unavailable, ill-prepared or are themselves suffering from the physical and psychological effects of the crisis” (p. 70). UNICEF (2006) also makes the point that teachers will have to recognize and address their own trauma and stresses before they are able to be supportive of children. Adding to this, in INEE’s minimum standards document it is outlined that “trained and experienced teachers and other education personnel may find themselves overwhelmed by crisis events. They face new challenges and responsibilities and may experience distress” (INEE, 2010, p. 70) Like UNICEF, Burns and Lawrie (2015) acknowledges that “qualified teachers are often unavailable, unready, or themselves suffering from the physical and psychological effects of the crisis” (p. 17).

Post-disaster, the context of teaching and learning diviates significantly from the norm. Emergencies often create additional learning needs that must be incorporated into traditional learning programmes. UNICEF (2006) also identifies that this context “presents opportunities to ‘build back better’ by introducing innovations and change to the system, curriculum and teaching/ learning
practices (p. 6). Yet the theme of teachers needing considerable support to realise these opportunities persists; UNICEF encourages humanitarian professionals to work with teachers to “develop creative ways of providing learning opportunities in the new conditions” (2006, p. 71). Further to this, they state that teachers will be in need of training in emergency non-formal education which incorporates “literacy, numeracy, life skills, and psychosocial support based on culture- and community-specific ways of dealing with stress and trauma” (UNICEF, 2006, p. 73). Although there is general consensus on the opportunity for change and improvement, there is little acknowledgement of the tensions between the ‘return to normalcy’ narrative, and the need to initiate programmes to improve pedagogy and curriculum content in line with what is considered to be global ‘best practice’.

A recurring theme is the need for teachers to provide psychosocial support either in the capacity of a leader, or in being able to make informed referrals to those with the relevant expertise. INEE (2010) proposes that psychosocial support should first and foremost be inside the class but that it should extend to outside of class activities also. The main role for teachers, in this regard, is to provide a programme of teaching and learning within a predictable structure, using positive disciplinary methods, and shorter learning periods to build concentration (INEE, 2010). Like other priorities, psychosocial support is presented as a role for which teachers will need specific training. It is proposed that teachers receive training on providing psychosocial support to learners through structured learning, use of child-friendly methods, play and recreation, and teaching life skills (INEE, 2010). Often, the provision of psychosocial support is based on a very Western notion of wellbeing and the use of equally Western methods of health promotion are encouraged (Zaumseil et al., 2013). Positively though UNICEF does state that training in psychosocial support should “be based around culturally-sensitive and community-specific mechanisms for dealing with trauma and stress” (2006, p. 73).

In many developing country contexts, didactic learner-as-passive receptacle modes of teaching and learning are still the norm (Connell, J. 2014). What is now considered as global best practice is based on a constructivist model whereby the child is at the centre of learning, knowledge is created through inquiry, and competencies are developed through the differentiation of learning activities associated with curriculum content (Schweisfurth, 2013). As such, international agencies appropriate the ‘external shock’ (Drury, 2001) factor of a natural disaster to initiate professional development for these pedagogies. UNICEF’s toolkit advocates that humanitarian staff take measures to incorporate training on child centred teaching methodology, alternative classroom organization strategies (such as children working in groups, sitting in a circle rather than in rows, peer support activities), and problem-solving approaches to learning (UNICEF, 2006).
INEE states that teachers and other education personnel should interact with and be accepted by the community (INEE, 2010) and UNICEF writes that teachers should be mobilized and prepared to play a broader community leadership and support role (UNICEF, 2006). In the UNICEF toolkit, humanitarian staff are directed to collaborate with teachers, education authorities, youth groups, the local community, and other partners on how best to adapt their processes and practices in the education space for the needs of the local population (UNICEF, 2006). Further, they are instructed to encourage teachers to search for ways to involve parents, community members and interested paraprofessionals in co-constructing learning activities with children (UNICEF, 2006). Correspondingly, INEE (2010) states that humanitarian workers should support teachers to “talk with parents, community members, education authorities and other relevant stakeholders about the importance of formal and non-formal education activities in emergency settings” (p. 88). The above statements carry the implicit assertion that teachers are not yet collaborating with communities, or that this is a new concept for the profession. Burns and Lawrie (2015) at least acknowledges that “many teachers may have deep knowledge about a community, its families and students, which is valuable in terms of working with students” (p. 73).

Having an appropriate curriculum is vital to the process of building back better and/or developing the appropriate skills and competencies for children to cope and thrive in a post-disaster context. Although the selected texts advocate for a return to normal, UNICEF does acknowledge that ‘business as usual’ should not be a viable option. UNICEF’s toolkit encourages humanitarian workers to take a lead in this setting by involving local community members, teachers, and local educational authorities in the identification and development of new learning materials (UNICEF, 2006). This example, like others, also relegates teachers to an auxiliary role in the process, and assumes that power, knowledge and expertise is best held by foreign NGO workers. However, a reason for this could be that the agenda of international NGO’s and associated authorities is to use this as an opportunity to introduce more progressive curriculum, content and pedagogies; skills that are not yet present in the teaching force across many fragile or developing states. Illustrating what teaching and learning might look like in this example, INEE states that “teaching should be interactive and participatory, ensuring that all learners are involved in the lesson. It makes use of developmentally appropriate teaching and learning methods. This may involve group work, project work, peer education, role-play, telling stories or describing events, games, videos or stories” (INEE, 2010). As has been discussed, this mode of schooling is a departure from the norm for Indonesian teachers and school leaders.

Alongside a crisis-relevant curriculum, all texts highlight the importance of the learning space, particularly in terms of developing a sense of safety and security for students. UNICEF (2006) directs
humanitarian workers to ensure that teachers create a learning space that is a “healing environment where pupils and teachers are given the opportunity for building resilience, reflection, healing and self-expression” (p. 18). Correspondingly, INEE (2010) proposes that teachers must acquire the skills and knowledge needed to create “a supportive learning environment and to promote learners’ psychosocial well-being” (p. 61).

**Theme 3: Teachers occupy diverse positions and fulfil multiple roles in a post-disaster context**

The sub-themes provided above highlight the different ways in which global agencies expect teachers to work and perform in a disaster context, from preparedness through to recovery. That aspect of analysis focused on how their roles and responsibilities are constituted in global discourse, and less on teachers’ experiences or positions as people and professionals in a time of disaster. The following analysis focuses on how teachers are broadly positioned as professionals in global disaster discourse. From these descriptions it is possible to elicit the ways in which transnational actors perceive teachers and their work in terms of capacity, competence, vulnerability and resilience.

Burns and Lawrie (2015) refers to the additional vulnerability faced by rural teachers at a time of disaster, citing that they often struggle to uphold the expectations placed upon them. She writes that this is due to the fact that they “are often lacking access to pre-service preparation, in-service training or in-service support” (p. 19). In terms of understanding what is meant by vulnerability, INEE (2010) defines it as “a characteristic or circumstance that makes people more susceptible to the damaging effects of a disaster” (p. 09). Further, it is stated that the social, generational, physical, ecological, cultural, geographic, economic and political contexts in which teachers work play a key role in determining the levels of vulnerability experienced (INEE, 2010). Where teachers lack access to appropriate pre-service or in-service support, this can be understood as a form of vulnerability relating to prevailing economic or political conditions. Based on these transnational determinants, rural teachers in a developing country context are qualified as vulnerable, which by nature of the term again positions teachers within a deficit theorisation.

INEE’s work on teacher professional development presents a concerning picture in terms of teachers’ competencies. Firstly, Burns and Lawrie (2015) demonstrate that in fragile contexts poor working conditions adversely impact teachers’ sense of identity and pride in their profession, and weakens teacher confidence in terms of applying new learning, which then contributes to their reluctance to participate in or lead change. She states that this has a consequent impact on quality. As teachers do
not have access to the necessary materials or services, there is no professional development and teachers cannot learn or improve their teaching strategies (Burns & Lawrie, 2015). A further confounding factor is that teachers feel hopeless in delivering innovative lessons due to oversized class numbers, not enough time, and non-existent resources (Burns & Lawrie, 2015).

In a similar vein to why teachers are described as lacking skills and confidence, INEE highlights the impact that an under-performing education system has on teachers’ motivation to work. Burns and Lawrie writes that “poor educational outcomes result in a teaching force that is high-risk for non-compliance of duties, attrition, poor performance, poor wellbeing and demotivation” (Burns & Lawrie, 2015, p. 21). Factors such as low pay or conditions that present perpetual professional and personal hardships often prompt teachers to look for alternative work and demotivate teachers to work hard or undertake any additional efforts (such as professional development). As such, “teachers continue to lack confidence in their own abilities” and “doubt their own efficacy, potentially further undermining the quality of teaching and learning” (Burns & Lawrie, 2015, p. 29).

All publications recognise that teachers’ fulfilment of their roles and responsibilities in a post-disaster context is dependent on their own sense of safety, security, and physical and mental wellbeing. As stated in INEE’s minimum standards guidelines, teachers’ ability to provide for learners depends on their own well-being and available support (INEE, 2010). Along these same lines, Burns and Lawrie highlights that many teachers in fragile contexts suffer from high rates of depression, anxiety and PTSD (Burns & Lawrie, 2015). INEE therefore justifiably advocates that teachers should not be expected to take on responsibilities that prove detrimental to their own psychosocial well-being or to that of learners (INEE, 2010). This presents further complexities and barriers to success for already struggling schools, and potentially compromises ‘well’ teachers who consequently shoulder the burden of their absent colleagues.

This analysis shows how teachers are positioned in globally focused discourse on teachers’ work in a context of natural disaster vulnerability. It is clearly summarised that whilst teachers are widely regarded as key personnel in contexts of disaster preparedness, response, and recovery, they are also relegated to a position of deficiency in the view of global experts. This outcome sits within a broader process of deficit theorising which is present across the texts. Bishop and Berryman (2009) posit that deficit theorising is what happens when authors, policy makers, or researchers see the locus of the problem as either a lack of inherent ability, lack of cultural appropriateness or limited access to resources. In large part, the deficit theorising conveyed through transnational discourse results from
the standards being used to evaluate the quality of teachers’ work, which are based on global neoliberal ideologies rather than locally informed examples of best practice or cultural norms.

In the next section I show how teachers are positioned and represented in transnational discourse relating to policy reform. Following this, it will be possible to determine similarities in the dynamics informing educational policy reform and the performance expectations on teachers in disaster vulnerable contexts.

**Analysis of Indonesian teachers’ work in transnationally produced policy discourse**

International discourse on Indonesian teachers’ work in a context of policy reform applies similar language and frames of reference to describe teachers’ capability, professionalism, and potential. The following sections highlight and analyse the themes which dominate the selected texts. Also, like the analysis of teachers’ work in education in emergencies, this analysis seeks to represent how understandings of teachers’ lived experiences in contexts of policy reform are influenced by a distant and distinct transnational discourse community; one which is informed and influenced by ideals of neoliberal education policy and less by an understanding or connectedness with local educational, cultural, and economic needs and realities.

The policy informing a majority of the material analysed below is Teacher Law 14/2005, which seeks to raise the profile of the teaching profession and improve educational outcomes by certifying teachers and doubling their remuneration through completion of a certification process.

*Theme 4: Indonesia’s education challenges are centred on the work of teachers*

Writing representing Indonesia’s education challenges is less illustrative of Indonesia’s national characteristics, and more symbolic of the economic, social and political developments that characterise the world’s emerging economies. It is worth noting that in the general spirit of neoliberal discourse, this writing is framed by a need for Indonesia’s education system to serve the imperatives of economic growth, free market ideals, and democratic principles rather than the needs or realities of local communities. As such, the transitions experienced by teachers and the expectations placed on them are reflective of globally driven change more than locally determined priorities.
One of the key developments in global education has been the transition from the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) and Education for All (UNESCO, 2015) target of achieving universal access to education (United Nations, 2015) to the recently established Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) priorities, which place increased focus on teacher quality and educational achievement. Indonesia finds itself within a global cohort of comparatively successful education systems regarding MDG and EFA targets, but now struggles to provide sufficient educational quality or industry relevance in schools. Reinforcing this point at a global level, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat’s identifies that:

Quality education is not possible without quality teaching. Teachers are at the heart of every education system, and plans and strategies for the initial preparation and on-going professional development of teachers are central elements of the process and dynamic of achieving goals and targets relating to quality, access and equity in education (Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, 2001, p. 13).

Highlighted by Edmond Hau-Fai Law and Ushio Miura (2015), this era of globally agreed upon goals and priorities is “characterized by constant change and interdependence, education is no longer an issue confined within national boundaries” (p. 4). Consequently, this puts the burden of expectation squarely on the shoulders of teachers. As quoted by World Bank authors Mae Chu Chang, Sheldon Shaeffer, Samer Al-Samarrai, Andrew B. Ragatz, Joppe de Ree, and Ritchie Stevenson, Barber and Mourschet (2007) promote that the “quality of education cannot exceed the quality of its teachers” (p. 16). What this means for Indonesia’s education system is that the increasing - and increasingly complex - challenges facing individual teachers and the teaching profession as a whole are of immense importance (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014). The World Bank’s report also confers that whatever the definition of ‘good’ education has been in the past, nowadays “the role of the teacher in providing an education of good quality is seen as ever more critical” (p. 40).

Connected to the above discussion on the centrality of teachers is the shifting focus of attention from educational uniformity to diversity, from teacher-centred to learner-centred approaches, and from examination-oriented learning to whole person development (Hau-Fai Law & Miura, 2015). Massive professional development is therefore required so that appropriate pedagogy is applied in Indonesia’s classrooms. A key issue, however, is that the majority of teachers continue to use conventional ways of teaching and these teachers do not consistently practice pedagogical approaches that are relevant to the learning needs of students (Hau Fai Law & Miura, 2015). Although many teachers are able to
theorise 21st century learning approaches, their actual repertoire is severely limited by contemporary standards and teachers still deliver direct from textbooks or uniform government lesson plans.

The need for, and absence of, learner centred approaches to classroom teaching is clearly articulated in all documents. UNESCO’s publication identifies a global shift taking place in approaches to teaching and learning, moving from the conventional, teacher-centred transmission approach towards a learner centred, participatory one. They state that there has been an increase in awareness of, and demand for, learner-centred pedagogical approaches that emphasize active learning. In these approaches, learners are placed at the centre of the process of learning, and learners, not teachers, are in control of the learning process (Hau-Fai Law & Miura, 2015). It is also claimed that innovative pedagogical practices allow teachers to facilitate more effective learning. However, for such approaches to be effective in the first place, UNESCO identifies that teachers need to critically understand and master such methods in order to make them work (Hau-Fai Law & Miura, 2015). Whilst this approach is identified as being of value in Indonesian classrooms, there is still a deep schism between current conceptualisations of a teachers’ work, the power associated with that work, and the role children can have in co-determining their own learning priorities.

According to market analysts McKinsey & Co. (Lim, 2014), academics (Bjork 2006, Nilan 2003), and transnational institutions (World Bank 2014, UNESCO 2015, OECD 2015) the key issue in Indonesia’s education system today is the quality of teaching. Quality in this instance is measured by Indonesian students’ academic achievement and the alignment of student qualifications with industry demands (Hau Fai Law & Miura, 2015). In this respect, a particular tension that resurfaces in all documents is the gap between the neoliberal vision policy makers set for teachers, the function of Indonesian classrooms, and the actual capacity of Indonesian teachers to improve student outcomes. UNESCO reports that while Indonesian teachers, especially those who have graduated from teacher-training programmes, generally understand that learning is an active process through which students construct their own understanding of concepts, it is much easier for them to just continue the conventional way of teaching (Hau-Fai Law & Miura, 2015). A reason for this is “the relatively low quality of Indonesian human resources compared to many other developing countries” (Hau-Fai Law & Miura, 2015, p. 148). Ironically, however, UNESCO also identifies that in order to improve the quality of its future human resources, Indonesia must now focus on assisting current teachers to improve their pedagogical practices (Hau-Fai Law & Miura, 2015).
Theme 5: Reform in Indonesia is based on global rather than local drivers

Symptomatic of neoliberalism’s impact on Indonesia’s policy reform, results from the OECD facilitated Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) examination have significant influence on policymakers. These exams are provided for all of the OECD’s member states to assess the quality of a country’s education system. In 2012 Indonesia ranked 64th out 65 participating countries in the examinations, which assessed 15-year-old students on their knowledge and skills in subjects relevant to their future lives such as maths, science, and reading (OECD, 2015). With these outcomes in mind, USAID reports on the factors contributing to Indonesia’s lagging performance, writing that “despite rapid progress achieving almost universal enrolment in primary education under a centralized management system over the last 30 years, significant problems in the education system continue to exist, including low public funding, poor completion rates, low teacher qualifications, poor classroom methodologies, and poor educational quality, as evidenced by low rankings in international testing” (p. 4). This sentiment is shared by UNESCO, who write that “while the majority of Indonesian children today have access to formal education, the quality of that education is questionable” (Hau-Fai Law & Miura, 2015, p. 161). Equally, World Bank authors state that overall “the Indonesian education system and its teachers are failing to achieve the results expected of them” (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014, p. 16).

Indonesia has undergone and is still undergoing rapid economic, social and political transformation. In this regard, Indonesia’s education system and the ways in which teachers engage with the country’s future workforce needs to change, too. However, with 2.7 million teachers this change is no small undertaking. When new configurations of teachers’ work are prescribed more by transnational institutions than by local or state powers, a tension in the nature and identity of the teaching workforce arises. The World Bank’s authors quote Bjork (2004), stating that over the past half century “Indonesia has constructed a definition of ‘teacher’ that fits the unique contours of the nation’s social, historical, and political landscape” (Mae Chu Chang et al p. 13). This definition, as will be described further in the next section, is more in line with an obedient and loyal civil service than the critical, innovative, and entrepreneurial change agent desired by transnational agencies and the global marketplace (Bjork, 2004).

UNESCO’s (2015) report identifies that pedagogical reforms are difficult to implement due to a perceived lack of local ownership of the changes prescribed. Many reforms in Indonesia are initially
introduced by external donor agencies and as such sustained transformation in teaching and learning practices in the country are severely hindered (Hau-Fai Law & Miura, 2015). USAID authors David Evans, Richard Navarro, Martina Nicholls and Sean Tate touch upon another limitation emerging-economy settings present, in that international aid money is not as plentiful as it once was (D. Evans et al, 2009). In this respect, there is a perception among stakeholders that while there may be well-intentioned efforts to improve teacher quality, some of these efforts are just not sustainable; meaning that when donor money runs out, the efforts will stop too (D. Evans et al, 2009).

With the recurring reforms (i.e Local Content Curriculum 1994, 2003 Education Act, Teacher Law 14/2005, Curriculum 2006, Curriculum 2013) that Indonesian teachers are required to interpret and apply, and the nature of these reforms requiring an increasing amount of creative and critical agency, the workforce is portrayed as being incapable of meeting expectations. A prominent reason for this is the civil service culture in which teachers still operate. Based on Christopher Bjork’s (2006) work, teachers are subservient and still understand ‘performance’ by the generic civil service indicators of the Suharto era. In this light, The World Bank document highlights that teachers have learned to follow the directives of upper level officials, not dispute them, and that the Indonesian government has ensured that educators treat the civil servant identity as ‘superordinate’ (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014). The impact of the civil service culture is expressed further in this same text, where the authors state that the “loss of a sense of ‘vocation’ and the ‘de-professionalization’ of teaching in the decades before the turn of the century were significant. Teachers were clearly seen—and were meant to see themselves—as civil servants first, answering up the system rather than out to students, parents, and local school boards (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014).

Considering the nature of recent reforms to provide learner-centred, community-responsive, and outcomes-focused teaching, the dichotomy of past and present models of education in Indonesia become all the more apparent. In terms of the potential for change, the World Bank document provides a reality check on what is possible in the current system. Indonesian teachers are “rooted in environments that have not historically promoted the behaviours and attitudes that lie at the core of education reforms” (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014. p. 190). Furthermore, highlighting this dichotomy the World Bank document quotes Bjork’s (2005) proposition that the Indonesian civil service culture still “promotes values and behaviours that are fundamentally at odds with the new role of the teacher” (p. 190). In this material, the civil service culture still permeates Indonesia’s teacher cadre, and the World Bank still positions teachers within this culture and frames it as a barrier to change. Reading across multiple texts, transnational discourse implies that by being a part of the civil service teachers are positioned as being ‘not professional’.
Present in many academic and policy-level discussions of the civil service culture the issue of teacher agency (Bjork 2004, 2005, 2006, Nilan 2003, World Bank 2014, and UNESCO 2015). One way of looking at the idea of agency is the extent to which teachers think, act and evaluate with a degree of critical independence and individual leadership. However, one effect of the emphasis on a civil service culture “is that teachers have not established an identity for themselves separate from that applied to all civil servants, or a distinct set of professional standards” (p. 13). With this in mind, the World Bank authors recognise that many teachers still focus more on ‘educating’ their students rather than on ‘teaching’ them (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014). Educating students in this instance refers to how teachers simply transmit government imperatives or, in more contemporary times, deliver material to be rote learnt for the narrow purposes of success in national exams alone. Working for decades in such a bureaucratic environment does little to make teachers able or eager to become agents of change. In this respect, citing Bjork (2006) The World Bank presents a clear position of where teachers stand in this area, they write that “Teachers in Indonesia do not cast themselves in the role of change agent; they do not even audition for the part” (p. 181).

Theme 6: The prioritisation of teacher development and professionalization

The above analysis identifies the teacher deficits that transnational institutions present in their publications. The language used to describe teachers’ work does not deliver optimism for the future of Indonesia’s education system, at least if measured by the standards promoted through a neoliberal lens. However, all publications also present recommendations for how Indonesia’s teachers can develop and become more agentic in their efforts towards achieving improved educational outcomes. The World Bank document describes though just how challenging any proposition for change is going to be. The authors write that “managing teachers (individually, both in a classroom and throughout a career, and collectively as an entire cadre) is a difficult enough task. Ensuring that they progressively develop in their profession, from first recruitment to final retirement, only adds to the complexity of the challenge” (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014, p. 01). The following sub-themes illustrate the ways in which transnational institutions frame teacher professionalism, the ways in which they configure barriers to their development, and the ideological imperatives that inform performance focused policy recommendations.

Globally, the teaching profession is perceived to be a second choice (and sometimes third choice) career (Lovett, 2007). This has significant implications on the quality of candidates entering the
workforce. Further to this, low salaries, large workloads, and decreasing levels of societal respect act as barriers to attracting a more skilled or ambitious cohort of graduates to enter teaching. To overcome such barriers, USAID’s authors argue that the drivers motivating people’s entry to the profession need to change (D.Evans et al, 2009). Referring to Teacher Law 14/2005, they agree that Indonesia needs to “support the professionalization of teaching by enhancing teacher knowledge, qualifications to teach, and providing sufficient salaries so that teachers can concentrate and teach well without having to look for other side jobs” (D. Evans et al, 2009, p. 36). The USAID report posits that the implementation of the Teacher Law not only raises teacher competencies, but also improves the welfare of current and future teachers.

A prominent detail in academic writing on teachers’ work is the scope of responsibilities and corresponding expertise required of teachers in the modern era (Connell 2009, Ghaill 1992, Robertson 2003). Mirroring this, the World Bank document illustrates that beyond applying new and improved pedagogy in the classroom, it is contemporary teachers who “must promote community support for the school and demonstrate respect for and engagement with local communities; who must demonstrate both good practice and strong ethical principles; and who must ultimately motivate students, ensure their health and safety, and help them learn what they want—and need—to learn” (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014, p. 40). Whilst the civil service culture of teaching is justifiably critiqued, it also seems logical that it is this aspect of Indonesia’s teaching culture – that of service - which is best positioned to deliver on the scope of ‘beyond the classroom’ responsibilities described above. Interestingly, however, this culture is not presented in a positive light. At best this fact is often overlooked, and at worst it is regularly presented as a deficit in transnational policy discourse.

A key factor in the success of Indonesia’s education ambitions is motivation. Indonesian teachers have become adept at following a pre-scripted work regime in which responsibilities or opportunities outside of this script are rarely pursued for various reasons, whether it is the perception of hard work, a lack of incentives, or a fear of being seen to behave outside of the norm. However, these barriers are all extrinsic; a key challenge faced by Indonesia’s policymakers is how to develop a range of intrinsic motivators that will commit teachers to their own development and the improvement of the Indonesian education system. According to the World Bank’s research, without intrinsic motivation current investments in education reform will be wasted. The report argues that even comprehensive reforms concerning teacher development will not work if teachers don’t have the intrinsic motivation to be a teacher (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014). This proposition is supported by UNESCO’s research, which states that “it is important for every teacher to have the internal motivation to improve their own capacity and the willingness to support other teachers to adopt the new methods. Without this,
the efforts of the government to improve the quality of teachers will be ineffective” (Hau-Fai Law & Miura, 2015, p. 156)

Also relating to the issue of motivation, the World Bank sees the civil service culture as presenting a further barrier to change, stating that the extrinsic motivators of income and titles is insufficient. For “teachers accustomed to seeing themselves as civil servants first and teachers second, enhancing their motivation will take more than the label “professional” and an increase in their income” (Mae Chu Chang et al., 2014, p. 191).

All three documents analysed assert the difficulty of implementing reform without the presence and leadership of skilled role models in the teaching sector. As described below, the expectation for teachers to master competencies which are not a part of their traditional remit is made all the more difficult by the fact that too few teachers within the Indonesian system are leading the way (D. Evans et al 2009, Mae Chu Chang et al 2014).

A key gap is that of creativity and imagination. Modern-day students are hungry for more creative and engaging ways of learning; at home they access YouTube, Khan Academy, and a range of global social media networks, yet in the classroom they are still copying blackboard notes by rote (Connell, J. 2014, Richmond, 2007). Transnational authors communicate quite emphatically that Indonesian teacher educators are poor at imparting creative, imaginative, innovative teaching methodologies that would prepare future teachers to develop 21st century skills in the classroom (D. Evans et al, 2009). Further to this, the World Bank reports that for teachers to change behaviour they need a purpose they believe in, they need their role models to act consistently and by example, and if they do have the skills and capacity for new behaviours they also need efficient and consistent reinforcement systems such as performance measures (Mae Chu Chang et al., 2014). However, as UNESCO highlights, the current system is not in a place to deliver on such requirements. They describe the current school environment as not supportive of the changing ways in which teaching and learning needs to take place. Thus, in many cases, in addition to braving the disapproval of fellow teachers and of students, UNESCO recognises that teachers must find relevant teaching and learning professional development and resources on their own (Hau-Fai Law & Miura, 2015).

It is of interest that the analysed documents offer deficit theorisations of the work, identity and capabilities of Indonesian teachers. It is also understandable that the authors and agencies they represent make strong recommendations for the ways in which teacher performance in Indonesia can be improved. In this sense it is worth noting that their very involvement in Indonesia’s education system is predicated on the donor disposition to identify gaps and provide funding and solutions.
Alternatively, the judgements made in these documents can be seen as a covert or innocuous attempt to justify a neoliberal mandate to internationalise and standardise Indonesia’s education system to meet the demands of global market forces.

In terms of teacher training, specifically in-service training for the country’s current cadre of teachers, all documents point out significant limitations in terms of the impact and sustainability of training. UNESCO’s report states that, “a challenge facing trainers is that teachers not only need to gain new skills to implement the new method in their teaching practices, but also need to change their paradigm of teaching” (Hau-Fai Law & Miura, 2015). This statement connects to an issue broader than skills, competencies, or even motivation. Change first needs to happen within the culture, identity, and belief systems of teachers. Resultantly, the “effects of training are arbitrary” and “... much training leads nowhere except to unrealized potential, frustration and waste” (D. Evans et al, 2009, p. 20). These outcomes are explained through the detail that many activities are inadequate or required resources are unavailable, strategies are poorly communicated, actions are poorly defined, performance monitoring is inadequate, leadership is uncommitted, and there are unclear accountabilities for execution (D. Evans et al, 2009).

**Theme 7: The limited efficacy of Teacher Law 14/2005**

Much of the discourse presented above is couched within the context of a decade of significant educational reform in Indonesia. Arguably the most far-reaching reform is Teacher Law 14/2005. This reform sought to raise the profile of the profession and improve educational outcomes by “providing a much needed incentive for teachers to improve their qualifications and skills and in doing so doubling their salary” (D. Evans et al, 2009, p. viii). With this policy, Indonesia aimed to fully qualify and certify its teacher workforce by 2015. Due to the fact that as of 2006 only 37% of Indonesia’s 2.7 million teachers had any form of qualification or certification there is clear evidence for this policy’s need (D. Evans et al, 2009). The World Bank reports that the teacher law mandates the core principle that teaching is a profession, and further to improving the living standards of teachers, the policy also aims to attract higher calibre graduates to engage in pre-service teacher training (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014).

As described above, the most salient feature of this law was its attempt to reprofessionalize teaching (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014). This is an interesting position on the part of transnational agencies; at once it implies that Indonesia’s teachers were at some point ‘professional’, but yet policy literature
regularly denies teachers this title due to their subscription to a collective civil service culture and ideology.

Teacher Law 14/2005 targeted teachers, but also required change to the whole system. As the World Bank reports, the “teacher management system in Indonesia is characterized by both inefficiency and inequality” (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014). Beyond this, the law sought to reverse the effects on teaching and learning that the organisation of Indonesia’s current education system engendered. The World Bank’s research found that the low wages of teachers were perceived to have a significant effect on teacher behaviour. They write that “many teachers, especially those in primary schools, were concerned quite correctly about the welfare of their families. This led in many cases to second jobs and high rates of teacher absenteeism” (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014). Prior to Teacher Law 14/2005 Indonesia had one of the highest rates on teacher absenteeism. In fact, “a teacher absenteeism study covering the academic year 2002/03 showed that 19 percent of teachers were absent when enumerators made surprise visits to a random sample of primary and junior secondary schools” (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014). Thus, the need for professionalization was also influenced by data revealing that on any given day nearly 20% of teachers were not in their classrooms.

Interestingly, the moment teachers become certified, neither the continuation of the certified status nor the payment of the professional allowance is conditional on subsequent performance (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014). All documents recognised the need to provide appropriate motivators to engage teachers in improving their performance and subsequent student outcomes. However, it would seem that the unconditionality of improved remuneration could have a net adverse effect on teachers’ motivation or commitment to improve their performance. This is reinforced by the USAID document, which shows that little else has changed in how well teachers are prepared or able to perform to the reform’s expectations (D. Evans et al, 2009). The World Bank’s research also concludes that “it seems that there is no dormant, unused potential that can be activated by paying teachers more money” (Mae Chu Chang et al, 2014).

**Understanding teachers’ work as presented in transnationally produced documents**

The document analysis presented in this chapter has been framed by the theory and practice of intertextuality as a literary device that creates and identifies inter-relationships and generates new understandings across separate texts. To achieve this, the methodology of critical discourse analysis was employed. The purpose of this chapter is to offer a critical understanding of how teachers’ work
is represented in transnational discourse relating to contexts of policy reform and disaster vulnerability. In the following chapter, the narratives of teachers who live and work in this same context in Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta, are presented. I am interested in the extent to which teachers’ narratives of their work and experiences align with the discourse employed by transnational agencies. The incongruences presented serve to highlight a particular disconnect between the ways in which teachers understand and experience their work, and the ways in which transnational organisations construct our collective understanding of teachers’ work in contexts of policy reform and disaster vulnerability.

In light of the key thinking informing my theoretical framework, particularly that of discourse communities and intertextuality, we can see that transnational texts employ similar language and frames of reference despite the fact that they describe teachers work in two supposedly separate contexts. Teachers are presented as in need, lacking, unprofessional, marginal and unmotivated. Yet they are also expected to have a leadership role in community preparedness and resilience efforts in an emergency context, as well as lead the improvement of students’ educational outcomes and the nation’s economic growth in the policy reform context.

In both spaces, the language and frames of reference employed present a questionably intentional gap between teachers’ current capacity to perform and the level of performance needed to achieve the standards defined by neoliberal norms and values. In doing this, transnational agencies create a sense of dependency and legitimise their ongoing involvement and authority in such contexts. James Porter (1986) refers to the producers of these texts as belonging to discourse communities that have their own rules and norms, and he writes that “a text is acceptable within a community as long as it represents the community episteme” (p. 39). In this sense, the authors are “constrained by this community and its intertextual preferences and prejudices” (Porter, 1986, p. 44). It is therefore apparent, given the similarities in language, frames of reference, and ultimately the positioning of teachers globally and in Indonesia, that the producers of these texts adhere more strongly to their own ideologies, standards, and norms than the strengths, realities, or needs of the contexts they write for. Reinforcing this notion, Alfaro (1996) suggests that “texts are subliminal purveyors of ideology” and as such, they “can influence and alter the subject” (p. 268). The analysed texts have defined for teachers and for a global audience how teachers’ work is represented in contexts of reform and disaster vulnerability. A key detail missing in all documents though is how teachers narrate their own experiences and define the nature of their work at such times. In response, and contributing to underdeveloped research in this area, the following chapter seeks to provide space, voice, and authority to the teachers working in a context of policy reform and disaster vulnerability.
Chapter 5 - Local discourse analysis

The UNISDR’s (2007) publication ‘Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School’ presents an Indonesian case study in which descriptions of teachers’ work and their efficacy are presented.

UNISDR reports that the May 2006 Yogyakarta earthquake “brutally reminded the country that children are most vulnerable to disasters” (UNISDR, 2007). In describing the conditions teachers faced in their work prior to the earthquake, UNISDR makes note of the fact that Indonesian teachers’ motivation and commitment to their work were generally weak due to their very low salaries, which forced them to take extra jobs. In terms of teachers’ pedagogical expertise and professional preparation for their work, the UNISDR writes that across Indonesia teachers were
Often poorly trained, possessed limited technical subject knowledge, and had a very narrow range of teaching methodologies at their disposal. Traditional curricula championed narrative methodologies, meaning the role of the student was reduced to that of an information receiver. Students were usually expected to recite by heart facts presented by teachers to them. The objective were to accumulate facts; and to understand of processes but concepts were rarely sought out (UNISDR, 2007, p. 17).

The impact low-level competencies had on transnational agencies’ ability to work with teachers as community leaders and agents of change was reported as inhibiting the quality of project outcomes. As such, to cope with the perceived poor motivation, skills, and commitment from school personnel, UNISDR describes that teachers working on DRR projects were provided with highly simplified and prescriptive material that could be used and replicated with minimum preparation (UNISDR, 2007).

This chapter seeks to capture and analyse the lived experiences of teachers working in contexts of policy reform and disaster vulnerability. From the perspective of the international community the skills of Indonesian teachers limit the extent to which they can be upskilled and fulfil ‘international’ expectations. In this chapter I seek a critical understanding of how teachers describe their experience, particularly the language they use to recall their roles and responsibilities, but also the way in which they understand the influence of the 2006 earthquake and regular policy reforms on their work. As described in chapter 4, teachers are portrayed in transnational discourse as lacking, unmotivated, and unprofessional. With transnational institutions’ regular reference to market forces and the skills required for employment in export and service orientated industries, these texts subsequently employ neoliberal frames of reference to describe and evaluate the quality of teachers’ work. Do Indonesian teachers see themselves and their work within similar frames of reference? Or do they employ alternative frames of reference that sit outside the confines of a professional sector and belong more in the history and culture of place, space and time?

**The 2006 Yogyakarta Earthquake**

The 2006 Yogyakarta Earthquake, measuring 6.2 in magnitude, occurred at 5.53am on May the 27th 2006 and claimed the lives of more than 6000 residents. Over 20,000 people also suffered serious injuries. The earthquake destroyed 300,000 houses and severely damaged 200,000 more. The high
fatality rate is attributed to the region’s population density of more than 1,500 inhabitants per km² and the fact that the building standards in the region are quite poor (Zaumseil et al., 2013).

**The interview process:**

In this section I critique how my personal experience of a post-disaster context - one of deep trauma, protracted stress, regular disempowerment, and bureaucratic indecision - informed my approach to the interviews, and how the dissonance between expectations and reality opened up new ways of conceptualising and understanding teachers’ work. It is worth noting here, in terms of substantiating Indonesian teachers’ narratives and my own personal experiences that the Yogyakarta Earthquake (magnitude 6.2) happened nine years ago and resulted in the death of over 6000 residents. The Christchurch, New Zealand, earthquake (magnitude 6.1) by comparison took place four years earlier and resulted in 189 deaths. Whilst Yogyakarta’s infrastructure is fully rebuilt, four years later much of Christchurch’s central business district remains ruined and as such people are coping with a sense of prolonged trauma and negativity. This reality thus influenced my expectations for teachers’ narratives in Yogyakarta.

Given that the interviews focused on personal trauma and questions of contested professional identities, I expected there to be a sombre mood with various tensions as concepts of loss, power, and vulnerability were explored. However, the focus group interview presented entirely different conditions. The participants enjoyed the opportunity to share their experiences, and recalled moments of personal difficulty with a certain degree of philosophical or spiritual positivity and clarity.

Questions relating to global standards in education in emergencies, the minutiae of policy reform and neoliberal influences, or their identities as teachers clearly frustrated the ways in which participants conceptualised who they were and what they did in this context. In the first focus group interview teachers reiterated the fact that first and foremost they are Javanese and Muslim; any contribution their profession makes to the way in which they formulate their identity or performance was secondary to their culture, community, and spirituality. In this context, the role played by cultural norms and systems stood out as being a more compelling influence on a teacher’s work and identity than professional development relating to policy reform or transnational initiatives in disaster risk reduction. This notion is reinforced by Oliver-Smith (2015), who writes that “it is culture that has
proven the key to understanding why and how various people worldwide deal with risk and disaster” (p. 38).

While facilitating the first focus group interview I realised that the premise of this research was based upon a presumptuous imposition of the qualifier ‘unstable’. Like the transnational discourse documented in chapter 4, I too had set the context of the ‘developing world’ within a vulnerable and deficit paradigm. Instead, through their personal conduct and the substance of their narratives the teachers presented a picture of resilience with regards to their experiences in the earthquakes. However, regarding policy reform, the teachers conveyed either indifference or an accepting resignation to the idea that as teachers they are at the mercy of government or international forces. They saw this as the norm and talked as if potential for an alternative reality was not part of their teacher psyche. Highlighting this element, I first present the dominant themes from the focus group discussion on policy reform. Following this, I provide an overview and analysis of teachers’ experiences working and living in the post disaster context of the 2006 Yogyakarta earthquake. A brief overview of the key themes and sub-themes arising in this chapter is provided in Appendix 3.

The experience of policy reform

RQ2: How have teachers responded to the changed expectations resulting from recent education reforms in Indonesia?

In the meeting room of popular local restaurant, seven teachers gathered nervously to discuss changes in their work since the 2006 earthquake. A stark reminder of where we were and why we were there, outside an evacuation sign instructing people of the evacuation route in case of a tsunami had been erected by Universitas Gadjah Madah (see figure 7). Many of the teachers did not previously know each other, and despite the two hour room booking it was important to first build a sense of familiarity and safety. Listening in to the conversations, teachers drew links to common connections, their shared history as teachers and civil servants, and how they were recruited for this meeting. I informed them that this interview was to be ngobrol-ngobrol, an open conversation focused on how the governments’ recent policy reforms had influenced their work and how they experienced associated changes.
Theme 8: Teachers’ have an ambiguous and ambivalent understanding of policy reform

It was apparent that education policy, both in terms of its nature and its philosophical or geographical origins was not something that the teachers gave considerable or critical thought to. Their way of describing policy reform was in terms of the operational implications it had on their day-to-day work. Teachers felt that new policies and associated training were not well disseminated at a local level. As a result teachers often did not even put required changes into practice and persisted with the status quo. Joko, for example, stated that policy “changes are not always significant, but in particular the 2013 curriculum was a hard transition to make. Many teachers struggled with this curriculum because the training was not appropriate, so we quickly went back to the old curriculum.” In support of this, Edy contributes that teachers “are often told that we’ll receive support to help us find our way through a new curriculum, or certification, but often it never happens, it never comes in the way we need it.” Following these statements, the group agrees that sometimes the reforms may seem significant but in a remote area like Bantul you just keep going as best as you can with what you’re used to.

Connected to the poor dissemination of new policy, the teachers comment that the nature of expectations are somewhat vague also. Edy, states that “quite often the changes would happen, we’d hear about them or have meetings, but we weren’t entirely sure what was expected of us.” Beyond this lack of clarity, Joko thinks that the changes most often result in increased administration rather than improvements on learning for students. He comments that “the local government’s expectations on us were a little crazy. It all seems to be focused on additional administration, showing that we are raising up the achievement standards of students, changing the quality of the system. But we are just teachers. We don’t have time. That’s why I think the expectations are crazy.” And in one of the only references to overseas influences, with regard to the changes and associated administration Joko also adds that “I think this is the trend, I really feel that these expectations, these demands that maybe they come from overseas and are not compatible with our own realities.” From these comments and corresponding behaviour, there was minimal agency in terms of interpreting and enacting new expectations in the classroom. This could be understood as a lack of accountability at a local level and a sense of irrelevance on the part of teachers regardless of whether reform was strongly enforced or not.
Theme 9: Administration and accountability are the outcomes of education reform

Administration was a defining point of much conversation about policy change and education reform more generally. Whether they were referring to the 2006 and 2013 curriculum reforms or Teacher Law 14/2005, participants reduced the impact on their work as increased administration. Rita states that “all policy change really means is a lot more administration for us!” Daris expanded on this, explaining that “so much of our time is now taken up by planning. We have to develop our own schedule, show this schedule to the government, prove that we’re planning correctly, teaching correctly, assessing correctly... for me the only impact on our work was an overload of administration.”

This relates to the reality that prior to Teacher Law 14/2005, and the 2006 and 2013 curriculum reforms a vast majority of classroom teaching was government prescribed and textbook based. However, on the contrary, the progression from educational uniformity to diversity and teacher centred to student centred pedagogies requires considerably more forethought, planning, and recording of data on the teacher’s part.

Daris goes on to state that after the certification process “it was the administration around our professional standards and processes that became very burdensome.” Interestingly, Daris also critiques this through a student perspective, stating that it has impacted the quality of his classroom teaching, describing that “for the students the amount of time available for learning has been limited.” He goes on to explain that it is “because we are committing extra time to completing administrational tasks during class time, we are focusing less on making good learning experiences for our students. The workload is hard for us to manage.”

Theme 10: The purpose and benefits of certification are unclear

When asked about why they thought they were required to undergo the certification process, Indah thought there was a degree of irony in the whole process. “It’s quite strange really” she states, “we have had to work so hard towards our teaching certification, to become professional teachers, even though we are already teachers for so long!” Although Joko and Daris’ comments demonstrate that there are positives, with regards to what it means to be more professional they are unable to articulate exactly what the advantages are. Joko thinks that “the certification process for teachers has been really good, it has meant a big improvement for teachers. It has made us more professional. So I think many of the expectations are connected to this: How do we get more professional?” With an element of positivity Edy then tries to remind his colleagues about the remunerative benefits, stating
“remember, if we can get the certification, show that we are more professional, then we can also double our salary!” However, with a quick change in his expression and tone he mutters “but we also double the amount of administrative work that we have to do!”

A key theme in this conversation is that of accountability. Joko adds that in the ‘old days’, before certification, teachers “used to take a lot of holiday. They’d take a month off for fasting, they’d take days off around national holidays also. But now, with the certification, there are always things to do and people to check up on you.” Daris, unable to expand on what he means adds that as far as he’s concerned, “that’s all the certification means: less holidays, more accountability!”

**Theme 11: The educational impact is negligible**

Regarding the benefit of teacher certification for their students, Rita, contributes that “there’s no way of knowing whether or not the certification is any better for the children!” Similarly, Atun refers back to the administration factor that teacher certification entails, asking “does it really make a difference for children? Do they notice improvements from the added amount of administration we now have to do? It’s like we’re now living in a traffic jam of administration and not getting anywhere for anyone!”

Taking a different tack, Joko refers to recent curriculum and pedagogical prioritisations on child centred learning. He says that “before, we had authority. But now it is the kids who are supposed to have the authority.” Edy sees the consequences of this change as negative, saying that “today teachers and principals have much less authority. It is all about the students’ voice and less our voice. But students do not yet have self-control; the older ones are more focused on girlfriends, entertainment and violence. We can no longer instil the same amount of discipline, character, or correct behaviour in our students, therefore I think the changes are not good for their learning and development.”

**Theme 12: Democracy equals regular change**

Interestingly, another theme arising through this *ngobrol-ngobrol* setting was that of the strengths and limitations of Indonesia’s contemporary democracy. It seemed as if the teachers saw democracy as a barrier to stability in their work. Joko claims that “all these changes, it is a result of our new democratic elections. When there is an election, they have to change the policies! Yesterday we have one politician one policy, tomorrow we will have a new politician and a new policy, and we have to
change our practice with the politicians. “When the teachers were asked if they think voters influence policy or if there are other influences, Edy once again refers to the possibility of transnational forces, stating that “maybe the government is tempted by things that are happening outside Indonesia. But we don’t know. How would we know?” Atun agrees, in an almost disinterested and resigned way, adding that “sometimes we just see stories in the media about the changes that might happen to our schools, but we don’t really know where those changes are coming from or what we are supposed to do.”

Analysis

How have teachers responded to the changed expectations resulting from recent education reforms in Indonesia? The focus group discussion was productive in terms of providing space and opportunity for teachers to voice their experiences. Although, despite regular prompting with more divergent ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions, the level of teacher analysis and reflection was limited. Nevertheless, the conversation did reinforce perspectives presented previously in this research. Manabi Mujumdar (2011) reminds us that “any discussion of teachers needs to take cognisance of the broad context and policy conditions surrounding practice” (p. 35). These conditions are never static; teachers’ roles are subject to on-going policy iterations resulting from competing ideologies and shifting priorities which are rarely influenced by teachers themselves. This is one explanation for the narratives presented above.

Notably, there was a distinct lack of teacher agency in relation to interpreting and enacting policy in the discussion. It was conveyed that policy is something that is done by others to teachers; at times the impact is negligible, or at worst it was presented as an operational inconvenience. This narrative, as Chang and Ree (2014) posit, is the potential result of teachers not yet establishing an identity for themselves separate from that applied to all civil servants, or a distinct set of professional standards. Likewise, as presented by Sriprikash (2011), the conversation above is the bi-product of a bureaucratic system that has historically positioned teachers as “functionaries of the state rather than empowered, reflexive professionals” (p. 28). The conversation also hints at what Ghail (1992) refers to as teachers having “a feeling of anomie” in their work, which has resulted from the hegemonic framework informing contemporary neoliberal policy and efforts to professionalise the global teaching force (Ghaill, 1992, p. 178).
It is also worth reflecting on the way in which globalisation theory allows us to form connections between neoliberal policy reform and natural disaster. Natural disaster activates and ushers in global processes and ideologies as transnational agencies gain interest in and access to peripheral sites of social and economic trauma (Sengupta, 2001). Through the narratives presented in this chapter, we are able to interpret that the global influences impacting teachers’ work are in part the result of forces beyond the economic and political realm. Globalisation theory therefore scaffolds our understanding that the introduction and proliferation of neoliberal policy in this context is principally the result of transnational influxes post-disaster; and that this influx is justified through the conceptualisation and representation of actors at the global periphery (such as teachers) as vulnerable and dependent on global aid for their development and success.

With this policy-orientated narrative as a foundation, the following section presents key themes and experiences arising from the seven life-story interviews on teachers’ experiences during and after the 2006 Yogyakarta Earthquake.

Experiencing the earthquakes as a teacher

**RQ3: What are teachers’ experiences working in an environment of natural disaster vulnerability or recovery?**

In the week following the focus group session, I followed up with each of the participants to facilitate life story interviews relating to their experiences living and working through the 2006 Yogyakarta Earthquake. These interviews took place in a variety of settings, including school staffrooms, community meeting places (see figure 8), classrooms, and in teachers’ living rooms.

Like the focus group interviews, life story interviews also used an *ngobrol-ngobrol* methodology, meaning participants governed the focus and depth of the conversation based on their own level of comfort and confidence to share. On occasion I would probe for additional detail, but beyond this the teachers told the stories they felt were most pertinent to their experience. It is valuable to note here that the teachers did not talk in detail about their curriculum or pedagogical decision-making after the earthquake. As is documented below, they refer to challenges in teaching and learning and the opportunity to relate learning to the context and conditions created by the earthquake.
These excerpts are an amalgamation of the seven interviews, and I have used the CDA methodology to excavate key themes and extrapolate meaning. This has consisted of a Fairclough-inspired model of analysis, which is the description, interpretation and explanation of discursive relations and social practices (Fairclough, 1992). At three levels of inquiry, these practices are framed in the “local, institutional and societal domains of analysis” (R. E. Rogers, 2004, p. 7). Correspondingly, James Gee (2004) has informed my approach, which promotes “connection building activities that includes describing, interpreting and explaining the relationship between language and cultural models, situated identities and situated meanings” (p. 7). To contextualise the teachers’ experiences as people and professionals, I have aimed to provide a holistic account of their experiences, starting first with teachers’ responses at home immediately after the earthquake and then moving into accounts of the role they played at a community, school, and classroom level.

Figure 8: Teachers and other community members race pigeons outside of Bantul. Credit: Chris Henderson.
When asked to describe memories of the 2016 earthquake, all participants started with the moment the quake struck, the impact this had on their homes, their thinking, and their actions in the immediate aftermath. Daris tells of how it was early on a Saturday morning and he was sleeping. “All of a sudden this huge earthquake hit! So I quickly tried to run out of the house, but it was so hard, I was also thinking about whether or not my family would make it out the door! Luckily we were able to get out, and my entire family was safe. The front of my house and the side of my house were completely crumbled. There was nothing left.” Similarly, Indah starts her narrative stating that “my house crumbled, there was not much left of it! However I was able to run, I was lucky to get out of my house in time.”

Rita refers to the symbolism of destroyed property and the notion of running on a bigger scale. She begins her narrative with the impact the event had on physical property, remembering that “the earthquake destroyed our houses and schools. The places where we all made our lives had crumbled.” Rita then talks of having to run, she describes how for her “when there is a disaster I have the urge to just run. To flee! After the earthquake some of us didn’t stay. We got out of Bantul! I didn’t even stay for a week afterwards, I had to leave the region!” Positively, Rita also philosophises that “our houses and schools may have been broken, but we still had our spirit. We still had each other for the most part, and with that you can be happy despite the loss. As long as you are still breathing! You have to be grateful for that!”

When asked about the school, particularly on the day of the earthquake, most participants expressed that the school was not a priority. Daris says that “it was probably 3 or 4 days, maybe not until the Tuesday that I was able to remember that I should also check out the school.” Indah tells of a similar scenario, remembering that “for a number of days after the earthquake I did not go to the school. Because of course my family was my priority.” And Joko gives a more direct and role-focused reason for avoiding the school immediately after the quake. He says that “because we did not see ourselves as an emergency service, we didn’t go straight to the school or to check on our students. Other people did this. It is the way it was.” Indah recalls that “the school was destroyed and the kids were not there so what was I to do? Go by myself? So for about three days I just ignored my responsibilities as a teacher.” For Indah it was the sight of the school and the extent to which it was damaged that caused the significance of the event to become all the more real and complex. She says that “once I eventually saw the school I just realised all of a sudden how much things had changed. Just how different things
now were. I really felt then, that for the moment we were on our own as a community. Yes, things had now changed, even how we cooked, how we cleaned, how we ate.”

Comments about food surfaced across a number of conversations, particularly when the teachers were asked about the school as a centre point of community activities. As Rita narrates, “there was so much anxiety. So much trauma. For many months we experienced trauma. Funnily though, it was the communal kitchen that became the place where we dealt with these feelings! Not so much the school. If you needed something fixed, something changed, something looked after, and people to help, then the community kitchen is where you’d find it.” Joko’s story also focused on the kitchen, recalling that the kitchen became a makeshift meeting space for teachers and parents. He recalls that “because we all cooked together in the community kitchen we were all able to talk together too. This became the site of conversations about the children, about their health and learning, and about their progress in preparing for national exams.”

Theme 14: Family always comes first

With the teachers leading the ‘ngobrol-ngobrol’, they regularly brought up the theme of family. Naturally, when teachers retold their experiences of the earthquake striking, family safety and wellbeing dominated the conversation. This is what mattered most for teachers and therefore what they most readily described when they had to discuss the impact of the earthquake on their work. Simply stated, Atun reservedly admits that “on the actual day of the earthquake I did not have the opportunity to see the damage caused to the school. The main reason for this was that my family suffered a lot of losses in the disaster.” With more confidence Rita recalls that “at first you think about the work you need to do, your responsibilities as a teacher. And then you remember that you have a family too and need to put them first.”

As the line of questioning was directed at understanding teachers’ roles as central figures in disaster response, Rita was quick to remind me that “teachers are just regular people. So of course they are affected by the trauma of a disaster and have to make personal choices. For example, if I had stayed in Bantul how could I be a good mother to my children? There was sickness, no electricity, and limited supplies to cook with. The air was putrid, they would have got sick with fevers. That’s why we left Bantul.” Indah shared a similar experience, remembering that the scale of the destruction was overwhelming. She recalled that “at first you have the instinct to help, but then you realise that you
need to put your family first…. You look around you and just see how much is destroyed and how big the event was, so beyond your own family there is really not much you can do.”

The teachers rationalised a prioritisation of family as being vital to their later effectiveness in the classroom. Removing oneself from professional duties to look after personal priorities was expected and encouraged. Daris stated that after a disaster “you have to find ways to protect yourself and your family no matter what situation may arise. Your family is your priority. No matter what, you have to find a way to make sure they stay safe!” Joko, sitting in his school’s new staffroom and speaking on behalf of his colleagues, recalls that “at this time we were in a panic, they also had their own lives and their families’ lives to take care of. And they had to play a role in their immediate community also, to help their neighbours, to clean up the ruins, ensure buildings were safe. Only after we looked after these duties did we have the energy or the thought to also look after the needs of the school.”

Although the conversations extended to what the situation was like when teachers returned to school, a number of participants quickly reverted back to conditions at home. Rita refers to the home situation as dominating her thinking and actions. “It was the community and responsibilities associated with where you live that occupied your mind. Your daily activities were very much focused on the community. But I suppose after a while the school and the classroom became an extension of this.”

Indah also recalled the importance of collegial support once teachers returned to the classroom. She tells us that “teachers were able to cry together, grieve together, and look forward together. We had to do this… Behind the scenes we did this. But upfront have the right spirit and character for the students and their families.”

Theme 15: Teachers’ work was meaningful and contributed towards children’s resilience

The teachers were asked if they were prepared for the earthquake. Daris said that he and other teachers from the Pleret area in Bantul were sent to a special course to learn about disaster preparedness. “We spent 7 days on the course and were given materials to be used in our curriculum. It helped us and students understand what to do in the advent of a disaster.” Joko recalled that he’d also had training and agrees that it had some use, but upon further reflection he states that “most of this preparation just consisted of what to do if a disaster happens during class time … like if an alarm sounds where do students go, what do we do … it was not very comprehensive.” Wawan contributes a different response, promoting the fact that at Sekolah Dasar Grogol “every semester we do a
stocktake of our belongings within the school, making sure that we have the right resources in the advent of a disaster, and we check the buildings, to make sure they are still safe. We then have to report our school’s safety measures to the local government office, this is so that we can take actions to minimize potential damage to property and people in a disaster.”

In a number of the life story interviews teachers’ interactions with parents were raised as a memorable detail of their work. Drawing from these narratives a context of improved communication and collaboration between teachers and students’ families was conveyed. Indah recalls that “after the earthquake we noticed that parents played a much bigger role in supporting the school, but as teachers we played a bigger role supporting families too. So it was very mutual.” In the months following the earthquake Wawan, “noticed that because learning was not very effective, because of all the disruptions, we were able to have conversations with parents about how they could help with their children’s learning at home.” When asked about the impact this had on teachers’ relationships with the community in general, Wawan states that “there was a real increase in respect given towards teachers and the role of education in their children’s lives during this time. I found that as a result of the situation we had no choice but to work together. Parents’ belief in teachers and our importance grew at this time. It was very good.” Rita also identifies an improvement in parents’ perspectives of teachers, saying that “we offered a lot in terms of children’s ability to be resilient. Parents noticed we contributed a lot in terms of their character, their attitude, and there wellbeing.”

When I ask about the most meaningful aspect of their work, all teachers refer to the Indonesian term *semangat*, which translates to ‘spirit’. Rita proudly recalls that she had to “remind students of how important it was to graduate! We had to raise their spirits again! Get them excited about their education and what that meant for their lives!” Atun presents a different perspective on learning, stating that as teachers they “had to look at the situation and think about what kinds of benefits they could derive from it. Was it a chance to learn more about our natural environment and the influence our environment has on our lives?” Other teachers focus more on ideas of coping and resilience. Eddy mentions that “after the earthquakes we also focused a lot more on the character that we required in our students, to cope with this disaster and future disasters. What I mean is, how to be resilient and creative when confronted with a disaster in our lives.” And Wawan states that in her role and expected character as a teacher she had to “be able to provide the right spirit, the perseverance, to inspire children and their families to continue doing what they need to do to get by.”

Although the teachers rarely referred to the term psychosocial support, much of what they discuss intimates a role covering the psychosocial needs of the children they worked with. Once teachers and
students were regularly back in the classroom, Indah states that for some time her students still suffered considerable trauma, but she was proud of the learning environment that she was able to provide. “They were still affected, particularly because they went home and that’s where their parents and relatives were struggling. School however gave them a brief respite from that life. Home for them was so disruptive, school provided some normalcy, some continuity. I really believe that we played an important role helping children thrive in a very unsettled environment.” Equally proud of his role and achievements as a teacher, Joko says that “the main quality we demonstrated at this time was being able to care about the students and their learning … because we lacked the right resources for teaching, we really just had to provide an environment of care and enjoyment for young people.”

A nexus between student health and wellbeing and educational achievement was also raised. Wawan recalls that shortly after the earthquake “we had the national exams on. So it was a big challenge for us to provide the right kind of psychosocial support whilst also preparing kids for the exams.” Indah also touches upon this challenge, explaining that teachers “had to have a lot of conversations about their learning, despite the disaster, we still have to learn. If we don’t learn we won’t rise up in society. We won’t succeed. In the post disaster setting, so much of the work is really focused on helping children to refocus their attention on wellbeing and learning.”

A strategy all teachers refer to in terms of describing their role was that of providing the space and opportunity for children to tell their stories. As Daris retold, “when the students came back to school they wanted to understand more about the earthquake, they wanted to share stories about what happened, who died, what the situation was like in each other’s respective villages.” Referring more broadly to challenges teachers had returning to their traditional curriculum, Joko identifies that “immediately after the quakes we could no longer teach maths, English, Bahasa or science, so we just helped kids talk about their experiences, understand the emergency, and look at ways in which they could grow in such a difficult environment.” The teachers also talked about the difficulty of student attendance and retention at this time, hence the regular reference to students enjoying themselves. As Rita states, “it was so hard, but we had to help the children cope with their difficulties so that they could enjoy being at school again and keep coming back to school.” As such, Indah saw storytelling and associated activities as a great tool for making this happen. She remembers that “after they told their stories, and participated in activities facilitated by teachers and volunteers, they started to enjoy the experience of being at school again.”
Theme 16: Our Javanese culture guides our actions

Many of the participants retold stories from the time of the earthquake with a degree of nostalgia; they reminisced about the connections made with family and friends, the interdependence they experienced, and incidents that became positive memories or lessons learnt rather than moments of trauma. Curious about the constructive way in which the stories were presented, I asked the question of how participants understood the impact of the disaster and resulting vulnerabilities. Daris believes that “you grow up knowing what the procedures are for a disaster. You and your community know what to do. So I think I can say that we are prepared. I don’t know if that minimises fear, but maybe it makes the reality of disaster much more normal in our lives.” In response to questions that probed her response in the immediate aftermath, Wawan offered a profound perspective, stating that “a disaster is a disaster, but it does not have to be an emergency. That depends on how connected you are with your community.” Rita, whose interview is filled with laughter, self-deprecation, tells me that “it’s no coincidence that my story is a positive one. It is just our culture, our way of understanding the disaster and all that comes from it. The good and the bad.”

The way in which the teachers maintained their composure and applied a positive lens to their stories is something that resonates across all interviews. “You have to try and understand the benefits” Wawan told me. She states that “before the earthquakes we never thought of disaster as having the potential to be a benefit. But after the earthquakes, as a culture, we really tried to look at how some good came from the tragedy.” Eddy also believed there were ways to derive benefits for young people and the community. He comments that “from one perspective our students’ learning was effected at this time. They couldn’t maximise their learning opportunities because there were so many disruptions. However, you could look at all the other ways in which they learnt at this time and see that as a benefit. They learnt more about their culture, their community, and the importance of their roles in it.”

When participants were asked to explain why they provided a certain perspective, especially when the topic was a difficult one but retold in a positive light, the response would regularly be that it is just the way Javanese people are. In particular, participants reflected on the way they provide each other with support. Rita, proud to promote the virtues of her Javanese culture, states that “we accept each other’s support, we provide each other with support. Our decisions are based on what’s best for our people, what’s best for our community. We accept that we are small part of something bigger. We have our traditions, we have our culture.” Joko also presented a similar argument, stating that “our culture promotes that we must help and support one another voluntarily. It is central to who we are.”
The desire and duty to help each other in a time of crisis.” At the end of her interview, I told Rita that I was fascinated by how much she appeared to enjoy the interview experience, at which point she directed me to “tell this story with our spirit and passion. We enjoyed the challenge and the sense of community and connectedness that came after the earthquake. You need to tell people that!”

An interesting angle on the support participants provided each other came from the sense that these interventions were valued because they came from local and familiar sources. Rita explains this, stating that, “Javanese people have an attitude that we don’t need help from outside. We don’t need other people’s support, we can do this ourselves!” Indah also relates to this view, informing me that “Javanese people, they don’t like waiting for or depending on help from outside their community. That’s just the way it happens. For example, if your house has collapsed you don’t wait for help from the government, you just get on with it with the tools and people you have available … We’re very independent like that.”

Theme 17: If it’s fast, flash, and fun, outside help is good

I referred to comments relating to the Javanese sense of independence to segue into the theme of government, international NGO, and private sector support for the school and community. I was interested in the relationships teachers had with humanitarian professionals and how they felt about the role they took in their school and community. Essentially, I was seeking narratives that would explain how humanitarian professionals positioned Indonesian teachers in their own schools or communities, and how Indonesian teachers responded to this. Significantly, the teachers viewed any assistance coming from beyond Yogyakarta as ‘outside help’, regardless of whether it was Indonesian or international. They were also quick to discuss the role of private companies as having the most significant impact on their work. On the contrary, the teachers’ recollections of the role played by the government or international agencies were more ambiguous; they were neither critical nor complimentary in their evaluation and they were ambivalent about the impact they had on their work, school, or community.

When asked about outside help Joko was quick to refer to the role of private companies and also makes brief reference to overseas organisations. He remembers that “we had really good support from private companies, also organisations from overseas were committed to supporting education in Bantul. This commitment to redevelopment minimised the impact on the victims of the earthquake. It was just direct support, the things we needed, or the things we could not get from elsewhere. It was
very fast and very direct.” Daris also recalls ‘outside help’ positively, stating that “there were various types of support from the government, and various types from the private companies. The private companies though were so much faster and more efficient!” The theme of ‘fast, direct and efficient’ came up in a number of the conversations. When I ask about why these qualities were so important, Joko contributes the view that “It meant that teachers could get back to the task of teaching in a good learning environment. Teaching was very difficult at this time because so much of our teaching resources were badly damaged. So fast support made our ability to do our job much better.” Rita, who was a strong advocate of community independence, had a change of tack when describing the role private actors played, recalling that “they had a no-questions-asked type approach. They helped us get buildings back up and functional. Their buildings were better quality than the usual government buildings and they were put up much faster too!”

Although questions were intended to generate conversation on the role of transnational actors and the way in which they positioned teachers, altered expectations of professional roles, or influenced pedagogical practices in Bantul, the teachers often talked more readily about the material changes that came about as a result of ‘outside help’. Rita recalls that “before the earthquakes, our resources were pretty average. Our schools, our buildings, our technologies. All very average. It was like our neighbours in wealthy parts of the country ran their schools with the latest technology and buildings ... but the earthquakes helped us to catch up. After the earthquake we had the best education facilities in the whole of Indonesia! The private companies made the school feel like a university!” Indah is also positive about the improvement of facilities as a result of outside help. However she is more critical about what these facilities meant for the quality of education available to students. “Our facilities were so much better as a result of all the help we received. This included computers, buildings, learning materials. Wow... the redevelopment of our schools was very good! But if I am honest, we knew that the learning was still not very effective for students. So we still have to find ways to improve this.”

The teachers were reluctant to address how the earthquake impacted them personally; in terms of describing how they managed their teaching and domestic responsibilities they would describe the time as difficult or traumatic, but there was little in the way of corresponding emotions. When they described the experience for children their demeanour indicated quite authentically that this was a time of adventure and enjoyment for them. Indah describes that there were “a lot of children’s activities on offer and sometimes you would not know where the children were! It was a very difficult time for adults, but for children I think they really enjoyed it.” Edy adds that much of the enjoyment came from the novelty factor of having international agencies in the area, which he saw as positive
from the children’s point of view but less so from the experience of teachers. “The kids loved to socialise with the foreigners, and I think the foreigners liked socialising with our kids also. But this was not necessarily the best thing for their education at the time. Many teachers saw this as negative.” When asked why, Edy adds that due to the outside help “our children had access to better food, better clothes, better learning activities than they usually do ... this made it so much harder for us to get them to come to school each day!” Daris on the other hand saw initiatives coming from outside agencies only as positive. He said it was timely and relevant, and also made mention of the kindness displayed by many of the international professionals. Daris believed that “we were lucky that we had support from international NGOs that helped us to deliver the right services to children. This minimised the trauma on teachers and on students. It was very good.”

Analysis

Do Indonesian teachers see themselves within similar frames of reference as transnational agencies? Or do they employ alternative frames of reference that sit outside the confines of a professional sector and belong more in the history and culture of place, space and time? In this section developed a more contextually situated understanding of the dissonant and complementary relationships between neoliberal discourse and teachers’ own experiences of their work.

In the interviews I expected there to be a sombre mood with various tensions as concepts of loss, power, and vulnerability were explored. Yet time and again the participants recalled moments of personal difficulty with a certain degree of philosophical or spiritual positivity and clarity. Although the transnational documents positioned teachers as key personnel in contexts of disaster preparedness, response, and recovery, in this same space teachers were relegated to a position of deficiency and marginality in the view of transnational actors. Through the narratives documented in this chapter teachers presented themselves as culturally empowered actors of importance within their own communities; whilst at the same time not denying their trauma or the peripheral position that they occupy in the global context. Additionally, although notions of vulnerability still persist within their narratives, the discourse is not dominated by self-referential deficiencies or a dependency on ‘outside help’ for survival. In which case, the extent to which these teachers are, by their own determination, on ‘unstable ground’ is contestable.

D. Weiner (2004) claims that vulnerability exists when people do not have sufficient adaptive capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of a natural hazard (cited in Zaumseil et
The teachers interviewed acknowledge the importance of outside actors in supporting their material recovery, but framed by cultural capital and a Javanese worldview they illustrated a capacity to cope with, resist, and recover from the impact of the 2006 earthquake quite independently. Greg Bankoff’s (2007) research critiques vulnerability by highlighting how it is commonly associated with marginality, and thus downplays people’s capacity and agency. Influenced by my subjectivities as an international researcher, the lens informing my own research approach had predetermined and positioned these teachers as vulnerable. From a global and comparative perspective these teachers are no doubt subject to multiple vulnerabilities; they work in a politically contested space and a context of geographic fragility. However, as I have discovered through these interviews, this perspective overlooks the significance and influence of culture and community as a determinant of local agency and resilience.

The UNISDR (2007) presents resilience as a community’s ability to resist, absorb, accommodate and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner. In this respect, although the teachers’ narratives were a departure from the curriculum and pedagogy focused analysis that I intended to capture, their presentation of family, culture, and community as being key factors influencing their work in a post-disaster context repositions teachers as resilient actors. It also highlights a point of dissonance; the analysis of transnationally produced discourse on teachers’ work in post-disaster contexts overlooks the value of teachers’ cultural capital. Recent research contributes to the validity and significance of this finding. James Lewis (2015) believes that in global disaster research the importance of behavioural and cultural issues have not been fully recognised. Oliver-Smith (2015) writes that “disaster research, from pre-event vulnerability through to impact and reconstruction has almost totally ignored the cultural aspects of disaster” (p. 37). As Susan Hoffman (1999) also warns, this oversight is not without consequence. She writes that “neglecting the deep cultural roots of every aspect of the disaster scenario has left troubling insufficiencies in research and tragic deficiencies in disaster praxis” (cited in Oliver-Smith, 2015, p. 37). Taking these statements into account and focusing attention back on the work of teachers the question needs to be asked: if transnational discourse was more cognizant of the centrality of culture and community in determining effectiveness and resilience, would teachers still be represented and positioned as marginalised, deficient, lacking, and vulnerable? Would we still suppose that teachers in such contexts were on ‘unstable ground’?
Chapter 6 – Are teachers in Yogyakarta on unstable ground?

This research develops a teacher-centred analysis of how transnational agencies can enhance teachers’ capacity to perform in a context of policy reform and post-disaster vulnerability. This has been achieved through the completion of two inter-related studies. The first study critically analysed transnational discourse to understand how teachers are represented and positioned in contexts of policy reform and disaster vulnerability. The second study analysed teachers’ narratives from a context of recurring policy reform and disaster vulnerability. This contributes towards a more complex understanding of teachers’ lived experiences in such settings, and provides insight in terms of the alignment and incongruences between transnational discourse and local realities. It is intended that this insight informs improvements in the way in which transnational actors represent, position, and include local teachers’ experiences in future discourse practice.

Key findings

This research is framed by two theories which have provided a lens and toolkit with which discourse has been deconstructed and analysed. Firstly, globalisation theory has constructed an understanding of how the structures and power relations present in Yogyakarta influence the experiences of teachers. As Held and McGrew (2006) write, “globalisation links distant communities and expands the reach of power relations across the world” (cited in Hayden, 2006, p. 13). This is where transnational institutions extend their influence on the work of teachers. My research asserts that globalisation has a paradoxical effect: teachers can be broadly impacted by globalisation and at the same time the very agents who determine the extent to which global norms set root in their communities. As demonstrated through my interviews, teachers in Bantul possess an agency which is rooted in cultural norms and allows them to resist the full reach and influence of globalisation and neoliberal policy reform. In this sense, future research in this field needs to be more cognizant of a reworked theory of globalisation: one that does not proliferate characterisations of actors at the global periphery as disempowered or vulnerable. Instead, a more agentic discourse of resistance and a recognition of the locally negotiated adaptation of global ideas and processes across peripheral contexts is required. As it stands, an incidental corollary of applied globalisation theory is the perpetuation of the very power dynamics that critical proponents of the theory seek to dismantle. This research has found that narratives of agency and self-determination are regularly overlooked as disproportionate power and influence is bestowed upon neoliberal forces.
Secondly, a theory of intertextuality has been used to inform my methodological approach. As stated by Schirato and Webb (2003) “globalisation functions as a set of texts, ideas, goals, values, narratives, and dispositions” (p. 200). In this sense, intertextuality has allowed for the examination of relationships and the creation of meaning between texts, and the understanding of the connectedness between texts and the lived realities of teachers in Yogyakarta. Through this process areas of dissonance are formed between teacher subjectivities and the constructs present in transnational documents. Alfaro (1996) suggests that “texts are subliminal purveyors of ideology” and as such, a transnational discourse community can influence and alter the way an audience understands a subject and reality (p. 268). Because transnational texts control global definitions of teachers’ work, through this research we learn the importance of including the voices and experiences of transnational discourse subjects alongside the voices of the global actors who write about them.

How is teachers’ work represented in international discourse relating to contexts of policy reform and natural disaster? In reform and disaster contexts the language and frames of reference employed present a gap between teachers’ current capacity to perform and the level of performance required to achieve standards defined by neoliberal norms. Teachers are presented as unprofessional, marginal and unmotivated. However, they are also expected to pursue a leadership role in community preparedness and resilience efforts, lead the improvement of students’ educational outcomes, and contribute towards the nation’s economic growth.

Indonesia has constructed a definition of ‘teacher’ that fits the unique contours of the nation’s social, historical, and political landscape (Mae Chu Chang et al , 2014). Artefacts of this teaching culture are still found in the narratives of interviewed teachers. Furthermore, frustrated by questions relating to transnationally imposed definitions of teacher performance and identity, teachers reiterated the fact that their professional identity in this setting was of secondary importance compared to their culture, community, and spirituality. These findings highlight the dichotomy between neoliberal ideology and the realities of local teachers. As the World Bank document cites, the Indonesian civil service culture “promotes values and behaviours that are fundamentally at odds with the new role of the teacher that the government is currently promoting” (Bjork, 2005, p. 84).

How have teachers responded to the changed expectations resulting from recent education reforms in Indonesia? Teacher narratives convey the sentiment that policy is something that is done by policy makers to teachers. Teachers presented the impact of reform as negligible; at times it was presented as an operational inconvenience, especially when referring to administration and accountability. Rarely did they talk about the minutiae of curriculum, pedagogical reform, or its origins. This finding
reinforces Cheng and Couture’s (2000) belief that teachers’ work in a global culture of performance has meant that there is a loss of control over their work and increased accountability. Another representative response is that of Indah, who states, “We have had to work so hard towards our teaching certification, to become professional teachers, even though we are already teachers for so long!” This demonstrates that teachers still hold tight to performance standards informed by a ‘teacher-as-civil-servant’ rather than ‘teacher-as-professional’ understanding of their work. A conclusive observation is captured through the way teachers described their work following the earthquake; they understand their primary role as building character, raising spirits, or upholding discipline. Although academic learning is referred to, the teachers rarely relate to the improvements in achievement that Indonesia’s education reforms target. This situation reinforces Sriprakash’s (2011) assertion that educational ideas are regularly reworked, reinterpreted and re-enacted in local contexts. Despite sizeable investments in teacher development for the acceleration of educational achievement, teachers’ own reworking and reinterpretation of their roles retains many of the civil service outcomes presented in Bjork’s (2006) model of performance.

What are teachers’ experiences working in an environment of natural disaster vulnerability or recovery? Whilst teachers are key personnel in contexts of disaster in transnational discourse, they are also relegated to a position of deficiency. Contrary to this representation, teachers present themselves as culturally empowered actors of importance within their own communities, whilst at the same time they recognise the significance of the trauma they suffered and the marginal position that they occupy in the transnational policy context.

Reinforcing the findings of my critical discourse analysis, Yogyakarta’s teachers were reluctant to describe the curriculum and pedagogy they employed previous to and following the earthquake. Joko and Daris also conveyed an aversion to the thinking behind child-centred pedagogies through their conversations about child discipline and teacher authority. Because teachers’ work is increasingly defined by measures of child-centered and inquiry driven curriculum, pedagogy, skills and ideas that teachers claim have been poorly disseminated, my theory is that they are therefore uncomfortable discussing their performance against evaluative measures which remain, for the time being, both foreign and out of reach.

Teachers did however demonstrate comparative strengths in areas that transnational actors presented as lacking. In numerous instances teachers self-described various forms of collaboration and leadership both within the school and in their community. They also referred to the fact that once they returned to the school setting, to the best of their ability they were able to provide a safe and
supportive learning environment. Finally, through storytelling and partnerships with NGOs teachers demonstrated that they prioritised the provision of psychosocial support for children and colleagues alike.

E. Schipper writes that “despite emerging work on the role of culture, beliefs and religion on disaster risk, conclusions do not offer guidance to policy and decision-makers about how to take socio-cultural systems into account when assessing vulnerability and designing projects and programmes for disaster risk reduction” (Schipper, 2015, p. 147). In this research, a point of divergence is the oversight of the value of teachers’ cultural capital and community connectedness as determinants of effectiveness and resilience. UNICEF, UNISDR and INEE collectively promote that humanitarian workers align their projects with culturally and community relevant practice and beliefs. For example, UNICEF documents that humanitarian staff “are instructed to encourage teachers to begin searching for ways to involve parents and community members in the co-construction of learning activities with children” (UNICEF, 2006). Whilst this statement is congruent with existing ‘good practice’ in Bantul, it still asserts and reinforces hegemonic concepts of power over local stakeholders. One cannot help but wonder whether or not this language contributes towards another identified theme of this research, that of international NGOs lacking respect for education professionals in ‘developing world’ contexts. As illustrated by the qualitative data presented in this thesis, Indonesian teachers are aware and capable of demonstrating agency in select areas of their work, as well as initiating collaboration with diverse stakeholders in a time of crisis.

An area that transnational discourse needs to change is the way in which the voices of teachers working ‘on unstable ground’ are included in future policy documents. As this research reinforces, it is important that the work of teachers is no longer overlooked or positioned as strictly deficient. Instead, the perspectives that teachers contribute to our understanding of policy reform and the impact of disaster on teachers’ work needs to be an included and a respected resource for improved resilience and recovery.
References:


Appendix 1 - Summary of texts used for global discourse analysis


• This document articulates the minimum level of educational quality and access in emergencies through to recovery. The standards are intended to be used by humanitarian agencies, governments, and local populations to enhance the effectiveness and quality of education in emergency contexts.


• This document provides recommendations and support to improve teacher professional development in emergency contexts. It recognizes the vital role that teachers play in emergency contexts and offers examples of effective teacher professional development and learning practices from a wide range of fragile settings.


• This Tool Kit has been developed for UNICEF officers, and presents information and tools to enable them to prepare for and respond to emergencies to comply with UNICEF’s Core Commitments for Emergencies in the education sector.


• The Good Practices covered in this document provide an indication of the major successes achieved in mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) curricula and activities. It includes examples from 23 different contexts globally which have been selected for their potential for replication.

Teachers’ work in a context of education reform:


³ Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
• This document highlights the different ways in which seven countries in the Asia-Pacific region are introducing policy changes and curricula reforms, and how teachers are responding to them. These reforms recognize that existing curricula are not suitable for the needs of learners in the twenty-first century, and seek to introduce learning that will prepare people of the region to succeed in a rapidly changing world.


• This document focuses on pre-service and in-service teacher training programs in basic education in Indonesia. Its purpose is to examine the effectiveness of current teacher training policies and programs and to identify the weaknesses that hinder improvements in teacher quality.


• This document presents and analyses evidence from an impact evaluation of Teacher Law 14/2005. From detailed classroom observations of teaching and learning it sheds new light on the complexities of undertaking education reform in Indonesia.

Appendix 2 - Overview of themes from intertextual critical discourse analysis of transnational documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Discourse Analysis Themes: Teachers Work in Disaster Discourse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The text in this table represents the key themes derived from the four chosen texts representing teachers’ work in emergency or post-disaster contexts. Each of the texts were read in full, and statements describing the work of teachers and schools, both in terms of current and expected function, were recorded and coded. The text that follows this table presents an analysis of the statements used to define the themes listed below.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emerging themes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 1</strong>: Schools play a complex role in the post-disaster context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 2</strong>: High expectations are placed on teachers in a post-disaster context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 3</strong>: Teachers occupy diverse positions and occupy multiple roles in a post-disaster context</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Critical Discourse Analysis Themes: Teachers Work in Contexts of Education Reform

The text in this table represents the key themes derived from the four chosen texts representing teachers’ work in documents representing policy reform in Indonesia. Each of the texts were read in full, and statements describing the work of teachers and schools, both in terms of current and expected function, were recorded and coded. The text that follows this table presents an analysis of the statements used to define the themes listed below.

#### Sub-themes:

- Teachers work in a context of ‘fragility’
- International NGOs lack a respectful understanding of teachers’ work
- Schools provide risk mitigation
- Education gives shape and structure to children’s lives
- Education provides opportunities for a better future

#### Sub-themes:

- Teachers and children catalyse community dissemination of risk reduction measures
- Teachers play a critical role
- In the post-disaster context teachers confront numerous complications
- Teachers need to consider priority learning needs in a crisis
- Teachers need to provide children with psycho social support
- Teachers need to focus on child centred pedagogy
- Teachers need to demonstrate collaboration and leadership
- Teachers need support to develop a crisis relevant curriculum
- Teachers need to provide a safe and supportive learning environment

#### Sub-themes:

- Teachers are vulnerable
- Teachers lack confidence and skill
- Teachers can lack motivation
- Teachers experience difficulty coping
- Indonesian teachers are below par

#### Emerging themes:

<p>| Theme 4: Indonesia’s education challenges are centered on the work of teachers | Theme 5: Reform in Indonesia is based on global rather than local influences | Theme 6: The prioritisation of teacher development | Theme 7: The limited efficacy of Teacher Law 14/2005 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-themes:</th>
<th>Sub-themes:</th>
<th>Sub-themes:</th>
<th>Sub-themes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The emerging need for and centrality of teachers</td>
<td>- Low student outcomes in international assessments</td>
<td>- The need to change the drivers for entering the teaching profession</td>
<td>- The need to re-professionalise Indonesia’s teaching cadre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A shift from uniformity to diversity</td>
<td>- The teaching profession still operates like a civil service</td>
<td>- Motivation is a driver and a barrier to progress</td>
<td>- The need to incentivise culture change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A shift from teacher centred to student centred learning</td>
<td>- the changing social, political, and economic landscape</td>
<td>- Teacher trainers are poor role models</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The insufficient quality of human resources</td>
<td>- A lack of teacher agency in leading change</td>
<td>- Training has a marginal impact on teacher performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix 3 - Overview of themes from teacher interviews and critical analysis of local discourse**

**Critical Discourse Analysis Themes: Teachers experiences in a context of policy reform in Yogyakarta**

*The text in this table represents the key themes and subthemes derived from the focus group interview with seven teachers in the Bantul region of Yogyakarta*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emerging themes:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 8</strong>: Teachers have an ambiguous and ambivalent understanding of policy reforms</td>
<td><strong>Theme 9</strong>: Administration and accountability are the outcomes of education reform</td>
<td><strong>Theme 10</strong>: The purpose and benefit of teacher certification remains unclear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-themes:</td>
<td>Sub-themes:</td>
<td>Sub-themes:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teachers do not give considerable thought to education policy or its origins</td>
<td>- Classroom teaching is impacted as a result of planning and admin taking place at times for learning</td>
<td>- We were already teachers, why did we have to certify?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The remuneration benefits are a positive outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- New policy is poorly disseminated
- A shift from educational uniformity to diversity requires a lot of planning
- “We are more professional now”, but not sure about what this means

**Theme 11**: The educational impact of certification is negligible

**Theme 12**: Democracy means regular change

**Sub-themes:**
- There is no way for us as teachers to know whether or not certification benefits our students
- Child centered learning means that teachers loose their authority

**Sub-themes:**
- Democracy is a barrier to stability
- The potential influence of transnational forces is recognised

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**Critical Discourse Analysis Themes: Teachers experiences working in the post-disaster context of Yogyakarta**

*The text in this table represents the key themes derived from the life-story interviews with seven teachers in the Bantul region of Yogyakarta*

**Emerging themes:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 13: Memories of the earthquake are mostly material</th>
<th>Theme 14: Family always comes first</th>
<th>Theme 15: Teachers’ work was meaningful and contributed towards children’s resilience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-themes:</td>
<td>Sub-themes:</td>
<td>Sub-themes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The crumbing of houses and school buildings is a persistent memory</td>
<td>- Family wellbeing dominated teacher conversations</td>
<td>- Teachers had some training in DRR, but it was more focused on evaluation rather than recovery or resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fleeing the area to a different town was an understood and respectable act</td>
<td>- We did not go to school because our full attention was given to our families</td>
<td>- Parents played a much bigger role helping children and the school after the earthquake</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teachers are just regular people and we experience trauma too
- Teachers played a bigger role supporting children at home and in the community
- Teachers saw their role as developing the spirit of children to learn again
- Teachers are proud of the psychosocial support they provided
- Teachers recognise the nexus between student health and wellbeing and educational success

Children’s story telling was a key strategy teachers employed to support children’s recovery

**Theme 16:** Javanese culture guides our actions

**Sub-themes:**
- You grew up just knowing what to do and how to cope when a disaster struck
- Disaster brings benefits and it is the benefits that our culture focuses on
- The sense of community and connectedness that comes out of a disaster is positive

**Theme 17:** If it’s fast, flash and fun outside help is good

**Sub-themes:**
- Private companies were seen to have a positive impact
- Our schools became like universities with flash new facilities
- Children loves engaging with the foreign NGO people, they loved playng their games

- Teachers recognise the nexus between student health and wellbeing and educational success
- Children’s story telling was a key strategy teachers employed to support children’s recovery
Appendix 4 - Advertisement used for recruiting research participants

Figure 8: Advertisement used for recruiting volunteers in Bantul District.