

The improvement of quality education education essay

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In 1985, an international association was founded, called the 'International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children' (ICPIC). This association aims in strengthening the links and communication between all those involved in PFC across the different parts of the world. It encourages, promotes and supports the introduction of Philosophy in primary and secondary schools in the different countries. It also coordinates and encourages the working together of philosophers and teachers for the best interest of the children's cognitive development (ICPIC, 2004). ICPIC encourages the improvement of quality education and promotes the setting up of regional centres of Philosophy to help in assisting and designing of PFC and philosophical enquiry courses. It helps teachers and school administration in setting up a programme that promotes the children's philosophical thinking (ICPIC, 2004). Membership to this organisation is open to all those who believe in the philosophical enquiry approach and encourages teachers to share and bring their theories and practices to the forum where different pedagogies of the doing of PFC are discussed and worked upon. It also shares research, information, news, journals and overviews all over the world.

Chapter 5:

Lipman and Sharp's curriculum proved effective for the doing of PFC in America. Nonetheless, it has undergone numerous criticisms on different levels, mostly since the content was written for US schools and based on US cultural norms and idioms. Hence, adaptations needed to be made for PFC to be used outside US, in other words, PFC needed to broaden its perspective to suit the needs of other cultures. Lipman and Sharp's teacher-manuals were also heavily criticised because of their excessive detail and bulkiness which

put off teachers instead of helping them. The problem with Lipman and Sharp's curriculum is that it's too complex for the ordinary teacher to follow and it assumes that teachers already have some background in Philosophy. According to Copenhagen (1987), early modern Philosophy in Europe was mainly focused on logic due to the strong connection between Science and Philosophy eminent during that time in Europe. Copenhagen sheds light on the complexities of the past and the development of various modes of thought. Through the decades, PFC continued to evolve and develop by a number of key contributors and pioneers to PFC. It spread from America to Europe and reached out to achieve worldwide recognition. In the process a number of philosophical approaches emerged, all of which target the development of thinking skills. The European approach to PFC was formed through a number of modifications and translations of the American model in order to suit the European context. A change in name followed, from 'Philosophy for Children' to 'Doing Philosophy with children', or the equivalent abbreviation 'PWC', since PWC targets more the practise of doing Philosophy, in creating communities of enquiry not only within schools but also in the wider community (Vansielegem & Kennedy, 2011). In 2007, UNESCO published a study called 'Philosophy, a School of Freedom', after a meeting held in 1998 where PFC was discussed. During this meeting experts in PFC proposed the creation of "... networks between countries to promote philosophy for children..." (Division of Philosophy and Ethics, 1998 pg. 28). UNESCO (2007) provides examples of good practice backed up by appropriate research in PFC to encourage the process of philosophizing in schools. It proposed the worldwide accessibility and availability of

information, initiatives and resources. Later in 2009, working groups and teacher-training courses were also set up to effectively introduce and encourage PFC in schools. Many organisations and institutions emerged, to enhance PFC in Europe, of which include SOPHIA and SAPERE as two leading predominate entities in the doing of Philosophy in Europe along with a number of other institutions and projects. Key persons across Europe worked hard for PFC to acquire its deserved prestige by coming up with PFC programmes, which are much simpler to follow and put to practice than Lipman's. Thus, through the years, different programmes emerged, some of which based on a set curriculum to be followed, while others consist of books to be covered, like Fisher's, McCall's, Murriss's and Cam's books. The European approach to literature took a different dimension than the American model since books and literature not specifically written with philosophical concepts in mind started to be used. A typical enquiry would thus start off from a thought-provoking stimulus, example a text, image, picture or video-clip and not necessary a novel. Raising the philosophical themes and concepts for discussion would then follow, where together the children would vote for the theme they wish to explore further in a community of enquiry. The children then form a circle with the teacher acting as a facilitator in the discussion in order to deepen and extend the thinking of the group. The children are also encouraged to listen well to each other, to question the validity of each others' arguments, build up on each others' ideas and also enhanced to think about one's own thinking. The Europeans also worked on providing simpler and easier to follow teacher's manual than Lipman's. In other words, as from the start, European

approaches to PFC, were meant to be much easier and practical for teachers to follow and put in practice. Nonetheless, different approaches gave rise to different teacher-training programmes and seminars to be attended by teacher and educators alike interested in doing PWC.

5. 2:

From 1980s onwards, a number of centres across Europe were establishing themselves to help in the advancement and development of doing PWC.

During this time Europe went through some major changes in working on the development of PWC materials and resources, creating communities of enquiry with groups of children and also training teachers in doing Philosophy. One is to point out here that different schools in Europe were affected differently by this change where according to the Menon website, in some schools PWC is still non-existent or negligible for a number of reasons including, timetable pressures, fear or reluctance to go beyond routines and fear of the whole concept of doing Philosophy (Lifelong Learning Programme, n. d.). The leading teacher-training organisations and institutions of PWC across Europe will now be explored.

5. 2. 1:

The European Philosophical Inquiry Centre, or its abbreviation EPIC, was founded in 1990 in Glasgow, Scotland by Dr. Catherine McCall. This is an independent non profit centre committed to deliver philosophical enquiry projects and implement philosophical enquiry with adults in community groups and with children in schools (McCall, 1991). In 1990, EPIC put into practice the first PWC class in UK using Dr. McCall's Community of Inquiry

(CoPI) approach, which was later also used with business groups. In 1992, EPIC postgraduate courses in philosophical enquiry opened up in Strathclyde and Glasgow Universities where students could study M. Phil. and Ph. D. degrees in philosophical enquiry. In 1993, EPIC moved to Glasgow University where postgraduates practiced the CoPI approach in the schools and communities through Scotland, Portugal, Germany, Bulgaria, Australia and England (McCall, 2010). EPIC is made up of international consultants (see Appendix A. 2. 1), trained in CoPI by Dr. McCall, offering services not only to schools but to all places where good thinking, judgments and effective communication skills are needed. EPIC organises a number of international conferences and presentations targeting different aspects of philosophical dialogue with children and adult. These would usually involve participatory workshops, live demonstrations, video presentations, reports of empirical research and presentations of theoretical papers from different countries (McCall, 1991). EPIC helps people of every age in engaging in philosophical dialogue and improve their thinking, creativity, problem solving and logical reasoning skills. It offers individual consultancy and group sessions in philosophical dialogue, problem solving and critical thinking. It also offers teacher training courses in the implementation of Socratic discussion and other dialogue methods. Teacher training courses offered vary from custom built courses to international and also in-service courses. It also promotes a number of theoretical and philosophical books for children and teachers (see Appendix A. 2. 2). (McCall, 2010) EPIC also organises applied Philosophical Inquiry projects with children in schools and with adults in the community. Examples include: The ' Empowerment through Philosophical Dialogue'

project, run in 1992, involving children and mothers from deprived areas in Glasgow. This project featured in 'The Independent', 'The Times', 'The Herald' on the BBC world, and BBC Radio in Scotland (McCall, 1991). The 'Philosophy is Fun' project, run between 1994-1995, in Castlemilk Glasgow. This project targeted six different age groups, from 7 years old children to adults. The aim of this project was the reduction of the levels of violence in the community. This project proved to be effective in preventing violence between different schools and the different areas in the community. It featured in 'STV NEWS' and in 'The Big Issue' newspaper (McCall, 1991).

5. 2. 2:

The 'Society for the Advancement of Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education', in short SAPERE, emerged in 1992 in UK. The word 'sapere' comes from Latin and means 'to understand'. SAPERE was established after the interest shown in the BBC documentary 'Socrates for six year olds' which showed Philosophy in practise based on Lipman and Sharp's PFC curriculum and materials (SAPERE, 1992). SAPERE serves as UK's PFC coordinating body by bringing together and coordinating the community of doing PWC practitioners and trainers in UK. This organisation promotes PFC by offering and organising a number of training courses, conferences, projects, resources and workshops in PFC from qualified PFC trainers. SAPERE promotes philosophical enquiry as part of the curriculum development, in raising levels of educational achievement and promoting the development philosophical and logical thinking skills for social and personal benefit. It also emphasises individual thinking, sense and meaning making as essential attributes for schools and the wider society. Since its

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establishment, SAPERE has developed partnerships with other PWC institutions, including: NUT, OXFAM, Living Earth Foundation, Shine Trust and others which work together in raising awareness of the benefits of PFC (SAPERE, 1992). SAPERE is responsible for the training of thousands of people interested in doing Philosophy in UK. The training courses come on three levels with accompanying guides and resources for each level. These courses are intended to offer a combination of practical and theoretical knowledge in PWC. Throughout these courses the teachers are helped in implementing philosophical enquiry and get accustomed to the 4c's of PWC which are: critical thinking, creativity, caring and collaboration (Naji, 2013). A certificate is provided after the completion of each of the SAPERE courses and it takes at least 2 years to complete the three levels. SAPERE level 1 is an introductory two day course intended for teachers to start practising PFC in the classroom. It provides an introduction to the theory and practice of PFC, including techniques and useful resources for enhancing thinking and encouraging enquiry. SAPERE level 2 focuses on extending and developing the PFC practice and theory for facilitating philosophical enquiry. It follows and builds on SAPERE level 1 and involves a 24 hour course, usually over four days, followed by 15 hours of classroom practice. In order to attend SAPERE level 2 one has to be a member of SAPERE, have completed level 1 and must have facilitated at least 6 inquiries. SAPERE level 3 focuses more on developing PFC practice in a number of areas, including: language and learning, knowledge and belief, identity and community, childhood and Philosophy experience and aesthetic response. This course involves 15 hours of self-directed study, 24 taught hours and 15 hours of post-course self-

directed study. In order to attend level 3 one has to complete level 2, be a member of SAPERE and have sustained PFC practice for at least 2 years. SAPERE also offer in service training for schools and other organisations. (SAPERE, 1992).

5. 2. 3:

The ' Stichting SOPHIA: European Foundation for the Advancement of Doing Philosophy with Children' was established in Amsterdam and legally constituted under Dutch law in 1993. It aims in helping and supporting European teachers, and anyone interested in doing Philosophy through a number of training courses, conferences and workshops in PWC. SOPHIA is made up of a community of people who actively practise PWC. Through the years, this organisation has helped in the development of PWC across different countries in Europe. In fact, different European countries are now members of SOPHIA including: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Catalonia, Check Republic, Croatia, England, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Malta, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Scotland, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, Wales and Denmark (Sophia, 1993). SOPHIA has helped in the setting up of a community of PWC practitioners working together through mutual respect and shared experience across Europe. In fact, the SOPHIA board is made up of key persons representing the doing of Philosophy in the different institutions across the different countries (see Appendix A. 3. 1). This organisation supports the doing of PWC in the different countries by taking into account all the European cultures and languages and encourages the working together in sharing practices, research and collaboration in joint PWC

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projects. In the process this helps in creating strong cultural links between European countries. SOPHIA is responsible for the development of the European curriculum for philosophical enquiry with children and has also published numerous related materials (Sophia, 1993). SOPHIA has cooperated and continues to cooperate with a number of other institutions, including IAPC and ICPIIC and also takes part in different projects, including: 'MENON: developing dialogue through philosophical enquiry' is a European project targeting the development of lifelong learning skills. This project encourages the transformation of the classrooms into communities of enquiry through dialogue and philosophical enquiry. It provides best practical examples of philosophical dialogues and promotes the latest theories and programmes of metacognition and reflection. MENON emphasises the engagement of the youth in active dialogue and active participation in the community. This project is supported by the ' UNESCO Strategy on Philosophy' which dictates the areas for the doing of Philosophy, including: philosophical thinking on world problems, clarifying readymade concepts, critiquing current world situations and philosophizing how Philosophy should be taught. MENON is a Comenius project formed by 11 European partners: Austria, Finland, Holland, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, UK (Lifelong Learning Programme, n. d.). The MENON partners work together in providing teacher-training courses focusing on enquiry and dialogue and development of essential lifelong skills and virtues. A booklet, DVD and handbook are available in different countries and translated in several European languages to help in the doing of PWC.' Developing Dialogue Through Philosophical Enquiry' is a teacher training course by

MENON, targeting both in-service and also initial teachers in EU. The in-service course takes 15 hours covered over 2 days while the initial teacher education course takes 30 hours covered over 5 to 7 days. During this course addressed the role and concept of dialogue and promotes the community of enquiry approach. 'Dialogue about Dialogue' is MENON's booklet featuring the important data and views about the practice of dialogue in education to supporting the 30 hour course. This booklet suggests that every teacher should develop dialogical skills through participation in a community of enquiry and using these skills to promote active participation and dialogue with their students in class. 'Towards Dialogue in Teacher Education' is an interactive DVD for teacher-trainers used during the training course consisting of dialogical situations in the classroom, Power Points and transcripts of dialogues. 'Towards the Dialogue in Classroom' is a handbook for teachers to use in the classroom. It includes materials to be used with children as well as support material for teachers to employ the community of enquiry approach. International workshops are also organised aiming in sharing experiences and bringing together the best practice from the partner countries, thus, promoting international dialogue. (Lifelong Learning Programme, n. d.) Philosophy and European Contemporary Art project (PECA), ran between 1995-1998, targeting Philosophy and Art. Children, teachers and teacher trainers from four schools, in Scotland, Spain, Belgium and Italy participate in this project. PECA targeted in coming up with a new approach to Philosophy and Art with children through philosophical dialogue and aesthetics for philosophical reflection to help the development of thinking strategies and philosophical judgments (Oldenburg, 1992). 'Journal 100' is a

European journal for children doing Philosophy, written by children themselves, established in 1996. This journal started when primary school children in Great Britain wrote a letter to other European schools to share their philosophical experience through discussion of philosophical issues with the participating countries spread all over Europe. This journal is translated and published in several languages (Folman & Heesen, n. d.).

5. 2. 4:

Dialogue Works, in collaboration with SAPERE, has established a growing network of PWC tutors and leading trainers committed to help children, teenagers and adults engage in meaningful dialogue. Dialogue Works organises a number of conferences, seminars, retreats, and runs a number of courses for schools and universities across Europe targeting the development of dialogue and philosophical enquiry. It also offers a number of training courses to schools, communities and organisations in: Philosophy for/with children, Philosophy for communities, Philosophy for global citizenship, Philosophy for creative curricula, personal and social Philosophy and critical and creative thinking. Dialogue Works also offers a number of in-set training opportunities to schools including: Introductions to PWC for groups of teachers (6hr course) and sessions of philosophical enquiry with pupils (1hr sessions), Thinking Days for whole schools and also parents' meetings (Dialogue Works, 2007). The teacher training courses offered by Dialogue Works are equivalent to the SAPERE courses and certificate in PWC. The level 1 course is introductory course where through interactive workshops the participants get theoretical and practical experience of developing good thinking, questioning and communicating skills and

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facilitating a philosophical enquiry. Participants receive a handbook with sample resources and level 1 certification and help in planning their first six inquiries. The level 2 course is a 24 hour course focusing on developing practice and theory as a follow up of level 1. Upon completion the participants qualify for a SAPERE-validated Level 2 certificate which is a needed for Level 3. With collaboration with Super Seminars, Dialogue Works offers a wide range of other services including professional advice and support. Dialogue Works published a number of useful resources including two very powerful books, ' Storywise-Thinking Through Stories' and ' The Philosophy Club-An Adventure In Thinking' (Dialogue Works, 2007).

5. 2. 5:

In 1985, Dr. Camhy founded the ' Austrian Centre of Philosophy with children' (ACPC) which according to MENON Handbook, was the first research centre for PWC in Europe (Life Long Learning, 2005). ACPC is an independent organisation that promotes PWC and PFC both in theory and practice and aims in empowering children by equipping them with philosophical tools. As an organisation it publishes curriculum and materials for teacher including translations of Lipman's curriculum and organises PFC courses including degree courses, international and national conferences and workshops. ACPC also takes part in a number of special, research and EU-Projects, it organised a number of international workshops, conferences, exhibitions on PFC and extracurricular activities. (see Appendix A. 4. 1). This organisation works with children and youth in kindergarten, primary, secondary and also vocational schools. ACPC organises ' Philosophy Cafes' four times a year where everyone is encouraged to take part in a Socratic dialogue and discuss

philosophical issues. 'Kidsparades' are also organised in the city of Graz in which children's rights and freedom of speech are promoted. Since 2012, ACPC also organises a 'Philosophy SLAM' three times a year in which everyone is encouraged to participate and the best philosophical content, presentation and style is rewarded. (Austrian Centre of Philosophy with children and Youth, n. d.).

5. 3:

This section will explore briefly some key contributors and pioneers to PWC and teacher-trainers across Europe. In the present there exist a number of contributors and freelance teacher-trainers who run training programmes in PWC.

5. 3. 1: Dr. Catherine McCall

Dr. McCall is currently the president of 'Stichting SOPHIA: The European Foundation for doing Philosophy with Children', the Philosophy Consultant for East Renfrewshire Department of Education, the founder and director of the European Philosophical Inquiry Centre (EPIC), SAPERE trainer and also the creator and director of teacher-training courses in 'Community of Inquiry' (CoPI). She is also board member of ICPI advisory board and SOPHIA (McCall, 2011). McCall is considered one of the pioneers of PFC across Europe and has trained hundreds of PFC teacher-trainers in the CoPI approach. She organises a number of training courses in the 'Nelson Socratic discussion' and also runs 'The Philosophy Doctor' (2011) website through which advice and solutions are given. (See Appendix A. 5. 1 for more about Dr. McCall)

5. 3. 2:

Dr. Cassidy is another key contributor to PWC and a former student of Dr. McCall. She is a founding member of the 'Philosophy with Children and Communities group' in Scotland and member of the 'Applied Educational Research Scheme, Learners, Learning and Teaching, Network Project on Communities of Enquiry in Educational Research'(Cassidy, 2009). Cassidy is currently a senior lecturer at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow in the Department of Educational and Professional Studies where she teaches a range of educational modules including an introductory module on PWC. She has also developed the Postgraduate Certificate in PWC to help the practice of doing PWC and also organises a number of introductory sessions in PWC. Dr. Cassidy is also part of the editorial board for 'Childhood and Philosophy: Journal of the International Council for Philosophical Inquiry with Children' (University of Strathclyde, n. d.). (See Appendix A. 6. 1 for more about Dr. Cassidy)

5. 3. 3:

Prof. Sutcliffe is considered a leader in the PFC/PWC area and well known for his training and good practice through balance of critical and creative thinking (Dialogue Works, 2010). He is a leading educationalist, director of Dialogue Works, founder and president of SAPERE and former president of ICPIIC. He is a trained counsellor and mediator who worked hard in introducing PFC and communities of inquiry to teachers. Sutcliffe runs the SAPERE Level 1 and 2 courses, in which creative inquiry and reflection are very much emphasised (Dialogue Works, 2007). Sutcliffe invented the concept of 'Super Seminars', which seminars gave a new dimension to the

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teachers' professional development through seminars (Dialogue Works, 2010). (See Appendix for more about Prof. Sutcliffe) (See Appendix A. 7. 1 for more about Prof. Sutcliffe)

5. 3. 4

Prof. Fisher's spent many years teaching in UK, Africa and Hong Kong before becoming a professor of education at the University of Brunel. He was a researcher where his main research interests were creativity, thinking, talk for thinking, dialogic teaching and PFC (Fisher, 2011). Fisher was also a writer and published a number of books on teaching thinking and creativity. His books are very popular and widely in number of countries, including Malta. Prof. Fisher has now retired. (See Appendix A. 8. 1 for more about Prof. Fisher)

5. 3. 5:

Dr. Camhy is a very important person in the PWC field with over 25 years of experience. She is the founder and director, since 1985, of the first research centre of PWC in Europe, the Austrian Centre of Philosophy with Children (ACPC). She was also the first to organise a school research project in Europe, named ' Philosophy for Children: A Research Project for Further Mental and Personality Development of Primary and Secondary School Pupils'. Camhy is the coordinator of PWC in Austria, teacher trainer and lecturer in a number of Universities across the globe (Lifelong Learning Programme, 2005). She is also a member of the board of: ' Thinking', the Philosophy Journal, SOPHIA and ICPIC. Camhy organises international

conferences on PWC in Austria every year and has published numerous publications (see Appendix A. 9. 1) (Trattner, 2009)

5. 3.

In 1990, Dr. Weijers started working as a teacher of Philosophy and philosophical education of the teacher training University of Alkmaar, where he taught for ten years. Weijers then started working with children and focusing on managing educational institutions (Centrum Kinderfilosofie, n. d.). Since 1991, he is the president of the ' Centre of Children Philosophy' in Netherlands, known as ' Betrokken bij Centrum Kinderfilosofi'. Since 2006, he is treasurer member of SOPHIA. Weijers is also one of the EPIC international consultants and senior advisor at ' Actis Advice' where he works with various institutions (Filosofie hotel, n. d.). Chapter 6: The doing of PWC as a tool for philosophical inquiry spread all over Europe, in one some countries more than others, and attracted the attention and curiosity of a number of other countries throughout the world. The doing of PWC in the continents of: Africa, Oceania and Asia including key institutions and teacher-trainers involved will now be explored.

6. 1:

The concept and practice of philosophising is still new in Africa. The ' Teaching philosophy in Africa: Anglophone countries' argues that Philosophy in primary and secondary level is not yet fully developed and is still being experimented (UNESCO, 2009). Ndofirepi (2011) in his paper ' Philosophy for children: the quest for an African perspective', argues that as a continent, Africa is able to use the innovative ideas, potentials and practices for its own

advantage, including content and methodologies of doing Philosophy coming from different countries. Giddy (2012) argues that a balance should be found between African traditions and modern European systems in suiting today's needs to African traditions and believes otherwise they are not worth passing to the next generation. It is argued that an African PFC programme with its own content and methodology is needed since not every material used in other countries e. g. storybooks can be used in Africa since they don't reflect the reality of African children. Thus, he argues that a PWC programme based on an African context including African philosophical thought, knowledge, wisdom, traditions, habits and myths is a requisite for African children. UNESCO (2009) adds that in Africa, the lack of teacher preparation in the doing of Philosophy is of concern since it is very low however teachers seem to be very enthusiastic about the introduction of Philosophy in African schools. A number of suggestions for action are also provided in this document since as Ndofirepi (2011) states, the introduction of PWC in the African educational system brought about a number of challenges including changes in the curriculum, role of the teacher, teacher training, classroom structures, aims of education and others.

6. 1. 1:

Professor Murriss is an important person and a main contributor to PFC in Africa. Murriss is regarded as a national and international PFC pioneer with her ground breaking methodology of using picture books to engage children in philosophical enquiry. Murriss is a qualified mentor of PFC/PWC trainers, a qualified Socratic dialogue facilitator and philosophical counselor. Murriss taught and trained hundreds of teachers in doing PWC and is currently

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a senior lecturer in Philosophy of Education at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa (DialogueWorks, 2007). (See Appendix A. 10. 1 for more about Prof. Murriss)

6. 2:

In 2009 emphasis was placed on the inclusion of Philosophy in the Australian National Curriculum (FAPSA, 2011). It was argued that this introduction would contribute to the general educational goals of young Australians in acquiring a wide range of general capabilities. The 'Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority' (ACARA) also contributed to this by submitting a list of advantages of introducing Philosophy as a learning area in the curriculum, including; the development of thinking skills, creativity, ethical behaviour, teamwork, social competence, self-management, civics and citizenship education. (FAPSA, 2011). Moreover, Australia is known for the 'Philosothon' where school students are encouraged to participate in a community of inquiry with students from other schools.

6. 2. 1:

The Federation of the Australasian Philosophy in Schools Association (FAPSA) promotes and supports Philosophy in schools across Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. It promotes the practice of critical, creative and reflective thinking through participation in a community of enquiry. FAPSA targets the formation of a professional network of teachers and educators working together in promoting Philosophy in schools and also in the wider community. It supports teachers through continuous professional

development by means of meetings, online discussions, forums and conferences. FAPSA also published a number of resources and materials to promote Philosophy and help teachers in doing PWC (see Appendix A. 11. 1). FAPSA is made up of representatives from: Australia, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. It works with the Australasian Association of Philosophy (AAP) which consists of academic philosophers from Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. FAPSA also collaborates with the International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children (ICPIC). FAPSA runs level 1 and level 2 teacher-training in PFC where Level 1 is an introductory course while Level 2 is open for all those who completed level 1 or possess an Honours degree in Philosophy. Upon completion of level 2, a certificate is attained which come in three categories; Teacher-Educator (Classroom Practice), Teacher-Educator (Philosopher) and full Teacher-Educator certification depending on the background of the participants. (FAPSA, 2011)

6. 2. 2:

' Kinder Philosophy' is an association offering teacher-training courses for professional development. It runs practical workshops in philosophical inquiry made up of six sessions of around 1 hour each. These sessions focus on: PWC, conducting philosophy sessions, tools and methodology for philosophical inquiry, big questions, concept development and lesson planning. ' Kinder Philosophy' also offers introductory sessions to Philosophy in schools and level 1 certificate courses, in collaboration with FAPSA (White, 2011).

6. 2. 3

Dr. Cam is an associate director of the School of History and Philosophy at the University of New South Wales. He is a pioneer in the introduction of Philosophy in Australian schools and is currently the chair of FAPSA, president of Philosophy in Schools Association of New South Wales and president of the Asia-Pacific Philosophy Education Network for Democracy. Cam runs a number of workshops for teachers and teacher-educators in many countries. He also edited a series of books on Philosophy, democracy, education and human values worked on documents on Ethical Behaviours for the Australian National Curriculum (FAPSA, 2011).

6. 3:

The main regions in the world have a working organisation of the doing PWC, i. e. North American has the NAACI, South American has the CELAFIN, Europe has SOPHIA and Australia has the FAPSA. However, no such organisation existed in Asia and the Pacific region till 2011 where the ' Philosophy with Children and Youth Network for Asia and the Pacific' (PCYNAP) was established (PCYNAP, 2013)

6. 3. 1:

The PCYNAP aim is a non government organisation, aiming in promoting and sharing research in the field of PWC. It also promoted the communication between philosophers and educators in enhancing the cognitive development of children and youth. It encourages the introduction of Philosophy in the formal and informal curricula and promotes the setting up of a regional centre of Philosophy. The PCYNAP organises a number or

workshops in Korea, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Iran where PFC is promoted for academic and life success. International workshops are also organised. Books published by the KATPIS are used by PCYNAP (PCYNAP, 2013).

6. 3. 2:

The KATPIS is the ‘ Korean Academy of Teaching Philosophy in school’, founded in 1995 after the ‘ the Studying Philosophy circle’ recognised the importance of doing Philosophy with children. KATPIS believe that Philosophy is to be redefined and shared with children, in equipping them with the right mental operations which will help them deal with today’s necessities, mainly through participation in philosophical enquiry. It aims in communicating, collecting and sharing examples of teaching Philosophy from other institutions in foreign countries and researching and evaluating different models of teaching Philosophy. KATPIS is responsible for giving in-service education and training educators in the doing of Philosophy (KATPIS, 2004).

Chapter 7:

The main objective of this dissertation is to explore and analyse the training of teachers in the doing of PWC in different countries across the globe, with particular attention given to Europe. This chapter gives a comprehensive account of the research tools, methods and procedures used for the attainment of this objective.

7. 1:

There exist various methods for data collection which can be either qualitative or quantitative. For this study, a combination of the two is used. Before starting data collection, a pilot study was conducted and after doing <https://assignbuster.com/the-improvement-of-quality-education-education-essay/>

the necessary amendments, data for the first part of this dissertation was gathered using quantitative methodology followed by qualitative for the second part.

7. 1. 1:

For the first part of this dissertation, quantitative methodology is used so that as much data possible is collected. According to Newman & Benz (1998) quantitative methods of research have always been the dominate mode of data collection for social sciences. This is so since, quantitative methodology targets an amount of people, thus allowing for generalisation to take place as well as better validation of the research results since it provides " as warrantable knowledge" (Bryman, 1984 pg. 77). However, for a statistically accurate result a relatively number of respondents must take part in the study. After doing some background research in PFC, a number of informed questions were put together about the practice of doing PWC and the training teachers are provided with in this area. These questions were appropriately and carefully written with a specific research-sample in mind, i. e. a predetermined sample was targeted. These questions were then uploaded, in the form of an online survey-questionnaire. Intensive online research followed in identifying people working in PFC and in finding their public email addresses. Afterwards, the SOPHIA organisation was contacted and asked for help in identifying other key persons from different countries. It was aimed in identifying at least one reference person from every country in Europe and also other reference persons from the other continents so that a global picture is attained and see where they stand in relation to teacher-training in PWC.

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Why online survey research?

"...survey research is used to quantitatively describe specific aspects of a given population." (Glasow, 2005 pg. 1) Survey research as a research tool usually consists of a series of questions targeting desired sample from the population. Most of the time questions are closed or structured where the participants can easily tick the answers or fill in a few words. This research tool is very effective since all participants will fill in the same questions which will be carefully structured to meet a specific focus. Moreover, in today's technological era, online survey research is one of the top methods used for collection of data since no one really has time to actually fill pen and paper questionnaires. In fact, today a number of worldwide companies make use of this research tool. Online survey-questionnaires have a number of advantages since people from foreign countries can easily access the same questions, thus participating in the same study. However, low response rates are common with this type of research, mostly due to the amount of questionnaires one is asked to fill-in every day.

7. 1. 2:

For the second part of this dissertation, qualitative methodology is used so that richer and more detailed data is obtained. Qualitative research is more descriptive and less measurable or statistical since it focuses on the ' how' and ' why' in order to come up with in-depth understanding. It usually targets a small sample of people and focuses on discovering their own individual experiences, meanings and in "... seeing the social world from the point of view of the actor..." (Bryman, pg. 77). Qualitative research contrasts

brusquely with the fixed measurements and form of quantitative research, but it is much more time consuming.

Why interviews?

In-depth interviews are used as the research tool for the second part of this research since it helps to probe more deeply into the subject matter. Asking the respondents to explain further or asking follow up questions help in attaining richer information. Interviews can be geographically or access limited but online interviews help in overcoming these limitations since today through the online world it is very easy to conduct online interviews in real time with practically everyone across the globe.

7. 1. 3:

Debate has been going-on about whether quantitative or qualitative methodology is the best for data collection, however, there is no clear cut answer to such question since both have a number of advantages as well as disadvantages. Newman & Benz (1998. pg. 11) argue that " Design validity is more likely to be built into studies when the researcher is open to both paradigms rather than precluding one or the other." The integrated approach of incorporating both qualitative and quantitative aspects in a study improves the quality of the global research since they complement each other and together provide a fuller picture. According to Newman & Benz (1998 pg. 12), " Both paradigms co-exist in the world of inquiry, and together they form an interactive continuum." They also argue that it is healthy to include both methodologies in a research since combining methods enhance the quality of research.

7. 2: Research design, content and objective

7. 2. 1: The online survey-questionnaire

The online survey-questionnaire consists of 18 structured questions: of which 6 include a follow up question so that the respondents can explain further and add any additional comments. This comment section allows the respondents to personalise the questionnaire by inputting their comments, experiences and information they would like to add. Moreover, 11 out of the total 18 questions are marked as compulsory. The 18 questions can be described as follows: 5 questions- focus on personal details of the respondent including name, phone number, email address, country and current position 7 questions- are multi-choice, where the respondents tick the appropriate boxes and may choose to tick more than one option 3 questions- are descriptive questions where the respondents have to describe, explain and provide detailed information 1 question- consists of a no/yes drop down option 1 question- is open for the respondent to add additional comments 1 question- targets the referral of other people working in the area from their country

The format of the questionnaire is designed with a particular research sample in mind, i. e. teacher-trainers. Therefore, this survey-questionnaire was sent only to teacher-trainers in the PFC area. The questions are concise and straight to the point since most of the teacher-trainers are professors or directors in the field and are very busy people. The objective of this survey-questionnaire is to attain as much data as possible from different teacher-trainers across the globe so that a global picture of the different PFC systems and teacher-training programmes available is formed. Particular attention is provided to European countries.

7. 2. 2:

Online interviews via Skype are conducted for the second part of data collection. Leading teacher-trainers with a significant amount of experience in working in PFC are chosen to participate in the interviews. To each of these, a covering letter together with the interview-questions was sent so that they know what information will be demanded from them during the interview, thus providing time for thought and preparation so that the interview won't take too long to complete. The interview consists of 16 questions, divided into three separate sections. The first section consists of 8 questions which target the personal experience of the participant as a teacher-trainer. The second section consists of 6 questions which target the data collected through the survey-questionnaire. These questions were designed after collecting as much data from the survey-questionnaire so that the interview-questions serve as a follow up. The third section consists of two concluding questions which involve recommendations, adding any additional data and opinion. The 16 interview questions are quite lengthy where the interviewer asks a number of questions which makes the respondent argue and discuss in detail. The same questions are asked to all interviewee so that different perspectives, opinions and experiences are obtained. Questions may be altered a little according to the trainer's background and additional questions are also asked when needed. Through the interviews a feel of what it means to be a teacher-trainer is obtained where real experiences from the point of view of the teacher-trainer are shared. (A copy of the interview questions is provided in the Appendix B. 2. 1 & B. 2. 2).

7.3

7.3.1:

The sample used for the survey-questionnaire was pre-determined since only teacher-trainers and people involved in the doing of PWC, from different countries across the globe, were targeted. However, no such list of people involved in doing PWC is readily available therefore the first step needed to be done involved the building up and production of such a list. To start with, an intensive online research was done in identifying some key teacher-trainers in doing PWC from different countries. Moreover, the SOPHIA organisation was contacted and asked for help in identifying key persons working in PFC in the EU countries. At this stage a short list of email addresses of different teacher-trainers were identified and to each one of the addresses a covering letter was sent together with a direct link to the survey-questionnaire. In the covering letter, the nature and objective of the research was explained and also how they could contribute to the research, if they wanted to. Each one of the respondents, who contributed, were asked whether they would like to recommended any other persons working in Philosophy and teacher-training, thus ' snowball-sampling' followed. Babbie (2013) describes snowball-sampling as a form of non-probability sampling where the researcher collects data from the already identified members then asks these individuals to identify other potential respondents and these are contacted and provided the opportunity to contribute to the research. In turns, the ones who chose to contribute would then recommend other potential respondents and they will be contacted as well. This sampling technique helped a lot in locating teacher-trainers in the different countries

across the globe which otherwise would have been difficult to locate. A number of other people involved in the doing of PWC were also contacted through Facebook. To each of these people, the same covering letter and link to the survey-questionnaire was sent through Facebook-message. Moreover, the ' pfc group' made up of a number of people working in PFC from all over the world was also contacted as well as the official ' SOPHIA' website and also the ' SOPHIA-Network for the Advancement of Doing Philosophy' group on Facebook. The survey-questionnaire was promoted in these groups. Half way through the research, Dr. McCall, the president of SOPHIA, was contacted and asked for help in identifying more people from some EU countries from which no response was yet provided. 238 people working in Philosophy were contacted through Facebook, 121 were contacted through email and another 14 were contacted both through Facebook and email address. However, 28 email addresses were deducted from the total since some of the recommended email addresses, although they were different, they belong to the same persons, thus decreasing the email addresses collected to 93. Therefore in total, a sample size of 345 people working in Philosophy and teacher-training were contacted. Each of the 345 were provided with a covering letter and provided access to the survey-questionnaire but only 26 participants filled it in.(The 345 list of contacted people is found in Appendix C. 1).

7. 3. 2:

For the interviews, 7 key persons with many years of experience in Philosophy were contacted and asked whether they would like to take part in the follow-up online-interview. These 7, were chosen because through the <https://assignbuster.com/the-improvement-of-quality-education-education-essay/>

years they have contributed a lot to the advancement of doing PWC and an interview with anyone of these chosen 7 would certainly be very fruitful and of great contribution to this research. Each one of these were provided with a covering letter and interview-questions before-hand and left free to choose whether to participate. 3 out of the 7 contacted didn't reply back, one replied but couldn't possibly find a slot for the interview and the other 3 took part in the online-interview via Skype. (The teacher-trainers contacted are found in Appendix C. 2).

7. 4:

7. 4. 1:

" A pilot, or feasibility study, is a small experiment designed to test logistics and gather information prior to a larger study, in order to improve the latter's quality and efficiency." (NC3Rs, 2006, pg. 1). After compiling the questions for the survey-questionnaire they were uploaded on the web. The questionnaire was completed first by me, to check that the questions and website work out fine. After making the necessary arrangement to the questions on the website, this questionnaire was distributed amongst four experts with many years of experience in Philosophy. These persons were kindly asked for feedback about suitability of the questions and whether they feel that something needed to be added or omitted from the survey-questionnaire. After receiving feedback, amendments were done and the questionnaire was disseminated amongst a number of teacher-trainers.

7. 4. 2:

Six months before the launching of the final survey-questionnaire, a similar page was uploaded, in collaboration with SOPHIA, in which the nature of my research and objective was explained. The aim of this page was to put together a list of practising teacher-trainers which unfortunately is not readily available. This aim was also clearly explained but unfortunately his page wasn't successful and was eventually put down since no interest by teacher-trainers was shown. Afterwards a number of questions were put together and uploaded in the form of a survey-questionnaire, which were also tested and piloted. After the necessary amendments were done, this online survey-questionnaire was launched. A list of email addresses was put together and all of them were kindly asked to participate in this survey-questionnaire. Some teacher-trainers were contacted through Facebook. A two months time-frame was set, where after one month a reminder was sent to the responds that didn't fill the questionnaire. Due to snowball-sampling some participants were contacted later than other, therefore more time was allotted for them to complete the survey-questionnaire. Late respondents were also taken into consideration. This survey-questionnaire was also promoted on Facebook, especially on the ' SOPHIA-Network for the advancement of doing Philosophy' Facebook group. A number of people involved in the doing of Philosophy were also contacted through Facebook message. Moreover, with Dr. Giordmaina's help this survey-questionnaire was disseminated within the ' pfc list', which is a private group made up of a number of people from around the world, involved in PFC. And with Dr. McCall's help, it was also disseminated on SOPHIA's private website.

7. 4. 3

7 persons were contacted for the follow-up online interviews (See appendix C. 2). Date and time for the interviews were set according to the availability of the participants. Skype was used for interviewing, of which the audio was recorded and transcribed (See Appendix B. 2. 3). During this interview questions targeting personal experience as a teacher-training along with questions targeting the data collected through the survey-questionnaire were asked. The same questions were asked to all interviewee with some amendments and additional questions asked when needed.

7. 5:

When dealing with human beings a number of ethical issues come in place. The American psychological association (2010) published the document, ' Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct' to provide guidance of standard professional conduct through principles and ethical standards. Ethical measures were taken throughout this research in ensuring the participants know beforehand what information would be demanded from them, both in the survey-questionnaire and the interviews. They were also informed beforehand that the data collected would be made available to SOPHIA. Participants were free to choice whether to participate or not and it was also made sure that no confidentiality data is provided to third parties e. g. phone numbers.

7. 5. 1:

Before completing the survey-questionnaire, all participants were informed about the nature of the study and what areas would be covered. No

confidential data including names, phone numbers and email addresses feature in the presentation of data and analysis sections but a list of the contacted and participating persons feature in the appendix section. Like this, it will be known who participated but no one would know which one was filled and by whom. Participants were also informed that the data collected will be made available to SOPHIA since this organisation helped me in identifying key persons in PFC. Moreover, coming up with a list of PFC teacher-trainers and practitioners is also very useful for SOPHIA; therefore this list features in the Appendix section C. 1. Moreover, all respondents were kindly asked to participate in the survey-questionnaire, and none of them were forced to participate. Though it was pointed out that the respondent's participation is valuable, important and highly appreciated, all participants were left free to choose whether to take part or not in the research. They were also given the opportunity to freely read through all the questions before choosing to participate or not. Moreover, only one reminder was sent to the participants, in case some of them were busy and forgot to fill it in. A thank you note was also sent to all those who participated.

7. 5. 2:

For the interviews, 7 persons were contacted but they were also given the opportunity to decline. Date and time were set according to the availability of the participants. They were also provided with a copy of the interview-questions before-hand so that they would know what questions will be asked and what kind of information is demanded from them. This helped the participants to think and be prepared. The participants were also explained that the Skype interview is to be recorded and that only the audio is needed

so that it could be transcribed at a later stage of this research. No video is recorded during the interview. No direct reference to the interviewee is done in the presentation and analysis of data but a list of the contacted persons feature in the appendix section, along with the names of those who participated. Like this, it will be known who participated but no one would know who said what.

7. 6:

7. 6. 1:

For the survey-questionnaire, Microsoft Excel was used to in-put all the data collected. Entries were in-putted by country and the answers to the same questions were in-putted underneath each other. All entries were then put in alphabetical order so that respondents from the same country were listed underneath each other. This process was done to facilitate data analysis. Names, phone numbers and emails addresses of the participants were removed. For data-analysis, each of the respondents is considered as representative of that particular country, thus allowing for generalisation to take place, since most of the respondents are teacher-trainers with many years of experience, are very well aware of the teaching and training in PFC in that particular country, are responsible for the teacher-training taking place and have trained hundreds of teachers in doing PWC. For analysis and discussion of the data collected, the respondent first grouped per country and then per continent. Questions are discussed and themes are drawn and discussed upon. Similarities and differences between countries are also highlighted. More focus is provided to European countries; however, a distinction is made between EU countries and the rest of Europe.

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7. 6. 2:

Interviews recorded via Skype are saved and transcripts drawn. Names are removed. The experience of 3 teacher-trainers is drawn and similarities and difference also highlighted. Themes are also drawn and discussed upon. The conclusions and experiences drawn during the interviews are discussed along with opinions and recommendations.