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Associate Professor Philip Roberts, Phd.
Leader, Rural Education & Communities Research Group, Centre for Sustainable Communities
Faculty of Education, University of Canberra, Australia.
philip.roberts@canberra.edu.au

"If you always do what you always did, you will always get what you always got."
> - Einstein or Henry Ford

In 2011 over ½ the world's population can be defined as 'urban'.
- Modernity = the move to the city.
- The 'rural' has been defined by major centres of power in this research and not in its own
- What does this mean for:
    - How what is 'normal' is understood?
    - The knowledges we value in education (curriculum).
    - What we assume as normal or standard (benchmarks/averages).
    - Potential loss of cultures, values, knowledges…
- Arguments about the levels of rural achievement and development are usually framed in comparison to a metro-centric norm.

IRRRRE 2018
- 'Through submissions and in almost every consultation, the quality of teachers and teaching in RRR schools was identified as something that needs to be addressed' (p.38)
- Selection, preparation, improving transfer processes, experience and expertise, reducing turnover.

Pre 2004
- Approaches: incentives (to attract and retain), scholarships & bonds, pre-service preparation and professional experience, sabbaticals and enhanced leave (inc costs).
- Challenges: Staffing and high turnover, access to PD, Social isolation, professional isolation.
- Possible model: four broad directions which encourages professionalism, recognises rural difference, compensates for economic loss and limits social isolation.
- Professionalism, professionalism, professionalism – of the rural.

Review 2004-2016
- Overarching themes of the opportunities and challenges of staffing rural schools, pre-service teacher preparation, and leadership.
- Sub-categories therein such as the policy setting, incentives, understanding place, mentoring, professional development, and teacher education.

- Staffing autonomy issues (notions of competition) – employable in the city? decline of the centralised transfer system.
- Principal responsibility.
- Scholarships and bonds – but less of them.
- Professional bonds, community bonds, innovation.
- Is transience a positive or negative?
- Pre-service programs and exposure, visits and so forth. But, with homogenisation of pre-service programs most rural focused units have been closed.
- PD and ICT issues, no substitute for face-to-face, as can pay attention.
- On leadership
  - Become a significant focus.
  - Working with community agencies and government services.
  - scope of the role.
  - challenges in attracting and retaining, stepping stone effect, workload, skills, and gender issues.
  - success linked to working *with* context and community.
- The issues explored in the research literature between 2004 and 2016 are similar in character to those examined prior to 2004 – 120 articles.
  - 'The continuity upon a theme within the staffing studies over the past twelve years, we suggest, presents the rural education field with an interesting challenge: if we have such a well-developed understanding of the issues, challenges, and successful approaches, why then are rural schools still hard to staff and why are the approaches proven to work not universally adopted by education jurisdictions?' (p.45)
  - 'it suggests a need to develop new ways to address the intractable dilemma of rural school staffing on a broader scale' (p.46)

Leadership
- Using Staff in Australia's Schools (ACER) data.
- 'Rural schools are different' – need specific training and skills. It's about knowing community.
- 49% started in rural, regional and remote schools - the training grounds for new leadership roles. 25% looking to move in next 3 years.
- BUT, perhaps more importantly it seems a distinct cycle within metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas is in operation.
- Considerations (from rural-remote perspective):
  - more fixed term contracts in remote, less satisfied with pay.
  - improving work conditions and benefits for teachers a higher concern.
  - higher teaching allocations but workload concerns less.
  - felt more supported.
  - challenges other than teaching rated higher, need for good community links and support from colleagues and peers – the workplace relationship higher.
  - need prior experience and preparation, PD.
  - more satisfied.
  - happier with graduates, and don't support local employment but want more control over local PD needs.
  - higher rates of 'external' appraisal but LESS satisfaction with usefulness of external appraisal.
- Retention of leaders

Question	Component loading		
	1	2	3
Higher pay for leaders who demonstrate advanced competence would help retain quality leaders	.791		
Higher pay for leaders whose students achieve specified goals would help retain quality leaders	.768		
Higher pay for leaders who gain extra qualifications would help retain quality leaders	.759		
Reducing workload would help retain quality leaders		.763	
More support staff would help retain quality leaders		.732	
Fewer student management issues would help retain quality leaders		.691	
Fewer changes imposed on schools would help retain quality leaders			.699
A more positive public image of the leadership position would help retain quality leaders			.692
Amendments to superannuation would help retain quality leaders in the profession			.618
Greater autonomy would help retain quality leaders			.398

Other related research
- Renewing Rural Teacher Education for Rural and Regional Australia (TERRAnova).
- Rural (Teacher) Education Project (R(T)EP).
- Schools that retain staff have strong school community relationships, but those relationships are different across community types.
- Need to help teachers understand communities, in their diversity, and connect that to practice.
- EQ important – know how to work with people different to you.
- Community issues matter, relationship between community composition and achievement, retention and so forth.

Health
- With UTAS Centre for Rural Health, linking the health and education staffing research and approaches. 'Education' and 'Health' interchangeable in research – issues the same, literally!
- Issues: retention, working conditions (hours and demands), PD, career advancement.
- Approaches include preparation for rural practice, rural placements.
- Rural practice is accepted by students / graduates, supported by government (accommodation etc), rurally located 'schools' to train locals in situ.
- Rural practice a distinct type of practice promoted, with many intending a career in that space. like the old bonded teacher maybe…?
- Education: LaTrobe's new NEXUS program (and National Teachers for Disadvantaged Schools project)

On the Rural
- Multiplicity of rural – no one size fits all works.
- Models have geographic, economic, socio-cultural components.
- Professional practice an issue across all rural professions, internationally.
- Need to get beyond 'overcoming disadvantage'
- Very little Australian research engages with rural as distinct
  - Analysis of last 30 years of main journals used in Australian education.
  - Less than 5% of articles the purported to have a rural link actually engaged with rurality in a meaningful way.

- 'Education in Rural Australia' (1991-2011) 26% of papers that referred to rural engaged meaningfully with rurality while in its successor, the Australian and International Journal of Rural Education (2011 – present) this fell to 18%.
  - Overwhelming majority of research is qualitative, with scant quantitative studies published by researchers. Dominance of pre-service education articles. Moving to university access (and more quantitative in that space).
- 'Re-centring 'outback' education' project. UC with Western NSW 'region'

Beware false prophets
- Durksen & Klassen (2018) 'The development of a situational judgement test of personal attributes for quality teaching in rural and remote Australia'
- … 'With the New South Wales (NSW) Department of Education, we aimed to develop a scenario-based tool to help assess the non-academic attributes necessary for beginning teachers working in rural and remote settings. Using a situational judgement test (SJT) methodology, we worked with experienced teachers (n = 19) to develop scenario-based items, which were then reviewed by school principals (n = 13). The teachers also adapted items previously developed and piloted in the UK. Next, prospective NSW teachers (n = 99) tried 32 new and adapted items targeting four clusters of attributes: empathy and communication, resilience and adaptability, organisation and planning, and culture and context. Item quality analyses revealed 22 acceptable items. We conclude by suggesting SJTs for promoting non-academic growth of prospective and beginning teachers' (p.255).

Fig. 1 Process for developing a NSW-specific situational judgement test on teaching
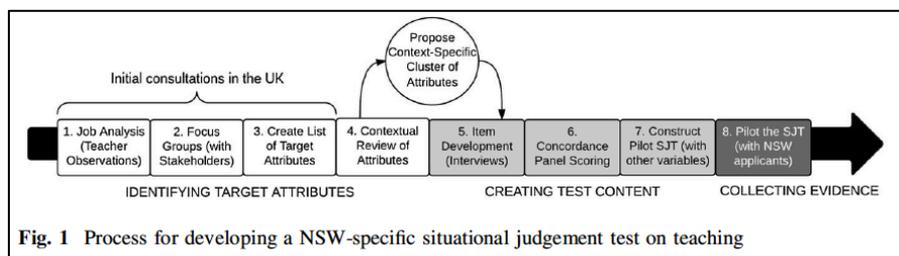
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Table 2 Participant demographics (*n* = 99)

Teaching level	Primary: 47	
	Secondary: 37	
	Unspecified: 15	
Teaching experience	Teacher education students: 56	
	Recent graduates: 34	
	New NSW teachers: 1 (3 years experience)	
	Unspecified: 8	
Teaching setting	Rural/remote: 7 (current), 14 (preference)	
	City/metro: 69 (current), 46 (preference)	
Age	20–55 years (M = 25.3 years, SD = 7.52)	
Gender	Female: 59	
	Male: 27	
	Unspecified: 13	

- 'In particular, future SJT research is needed that includes a greater number of participants who are interested in or have had experience in rural or remote contexts since **only 21%** who trialled the SJT expressed an interest in rural or remote teaching' p. 270

Thoughts
- What are our assumptions behind the model of schooling we offer?
  - Compulsory secondary schooling, and its model, has only been this way since 1968.
  - Does it serve teachers or students?
- Curriculum provision.
  - The tyranny of access – to what, in what way? new approaches to technology mediated learning? who prepares teachers fort this?
  - Learning sciences versus pedagogy
- Don't mention ATAR's – With higher ATAR's for teaching no rural kids would qualify. Same with new NSW requirements.
  - But we know teachers with rural backgrounds are retained.
  - Teach for Australia – no retention advantage.
- Progressive credential building, retraining locals as TA's into re-training.
- Rural teaching schools & Rural teaching as a specific speciality.
- Fostering local links between schools and community development – school subjects, local knowledge and applications.
- Travelling subject experts, subject intensive schools (why study concurrently?) like travelling health experts.
- Subject experts supported by rural generalist teachers.
- School networks sharing teachers, larger regional schools support.
- Rethinking social justice – beyond the redistribution of resources.
  - Soja: 'Seeking Spatial Justice' (2010) examines the spatial dimension of justice and how inequity is spatially produced. It argues that traditional approaches to social justice are dominated by historical and social ways of understanding the world. These are 'fixed' in space, or space-neutral. That is, the geography of justice is only a backdrop that social practice happens within and not a substantive factor in creating and producing inequity. Soja proposes 'spatility' as a third way of seeing the world, in a trialectic relationship with historical and social approaches.

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