Academic degree recognition in a global era: The case of the doctorate of education (EdD) in Israel

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Abstract

The current discussion around recognition of the doctorate of education (EdD) typically focuses on a national context, usually in relation to the PhD; however, relatively little is known about recognition of the EdD degree in countries that do not offer the qualification. As international cohorts and online delivery of doctoral education grows, it is valuable to understand the recognition of the EdD, particularly in countries that do not currently offer it, and in which policy and legislation may impede its recognition. Using Israel as a case, this study explores EdD recognition in a country that does not offer the degree and that has a particularly rigid recognition system, likely as a result of a neoliberal experiment with the deregulation of the higher education arena in the 1990s. My investigations indicate three spheres of recognition for the degree: the public, private and academic spheres. This article outlines these spheres and explores the implications of such a system.

Keywords: EdD; professional doctorate; recognition; Israel; policy

Introduction/rationale

The doctorate of education (EdD) exists in the United Kingdom (UK), the United States (USA), Australia and Canada, while other countries around the world, such as Ireland, China, Iceland, South Africa and Singapore, are creating their own EdD programmes. However, Israel, in common with much of the Middle East, has yet to implement an EdD programme. Moreover, with the exception of those from traditional medical fields (MD, PharmD, DMD and DVM), which are relatively unknown to the general public, the Israeli higher education (HE) system does not offer professional doctorates. Terminal degrees in most fields in Israel lead to a doctorate of philosophy (PhD). Those who obtain professional doctorates abroad must import a qualification from a foreign higher education institution (HEI), and in many instances must both prove the quality of the award-granting HEI and also demonstrate the rigour and worth of the qualification, often through lengthy bureaucratic procedures.

It might be assumed that professional doctorates would therefore be highly unattractive to potential students in the Israeli context; however, this does not seem to be the case with the EdD. Poultney (2010) notes that despite the barriers to recognition in their home country, a large number of Israeli students are enrolled in the international EdD cohort at the University of Derby. During my own search for doctoral programmes in the field of education, I found and consulted with graduates of foreign EdD programmes working in Israel in various capacities. Also, while PhD graduates almost exclusively compose education faculties in Israeli universities

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and colleges, there are adjunct lecturers and a few tenured faculty with professional doctoral degrees (for example, EdD, doctor of psychology). It therefore appears that recognition of the EdD in the Israeli context is not uniform and is thus more nuanced.

This article explores the recognition of the EdD in Israel, a country that does not offer the degree and in which official regulations greatly shape recognition of the degree. I will begin with a brief introduction of the EdD and the HE system in Israel, with a special emphasis on the history of foreign HE provision in Israel. I will then present the official policy of the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Council for Higher Education Law of 1958 (CHE Law) as they impact on the EdD, and I will posit that these policies together create three spheres of recognition for the EdD. I will outline these spheres and explore the implications of the current system. I will then acknowledge the limitations of the study and highlight areas for further investigation. My goal is to stimulate discussion on the recognition of the EdD in countries around the world, particularly those that do not offer it.

Background to the EdD

While it is not within the scope of this paper to provide an exhaustive review of the EdD, it is essential to have a general grasp of the degree from the academic literature. Also, it is important to understand some of the key issues surrounding professional doctorates, in particular their origins and forms, and the impact of the degree along with the motivations and goals of participants. This section will provide a brief outline of these issues.

Since Harvard University first offered the EdD almost a century ago, the availability of EdD programmes has grown and their reach has extended around the globe, particularly in the last half of the twentieth century. Scholars offer many reasons for the proliferation of professional doctorate provision, including: (1) the increasing need for high-level, transferable skills (Kot and Hendel, 2012); (2) the growth of the knowledge economy and the view of Gibbons *et al.* (1994) that knowledge production is moving from Mode 1, pure theoretical knowledge, to Mode 2, applicable knowledge (Huisman and Naidoo, 2006; Wildy *et al.*, 2015); (3) government policies and initiatives that emphasize the importance of applicable knowledge and training to answer contemporary problems of economic and scientific innovation and competition (Bourner *et al.*, 2001); and (4) professional fields (for example, fine and performing arts) that may be better suited to applied doctoral programmes (Macleod and Holdridge, 2004; Sims and Cassidy, 2016). Moreover, global developments impact on the spread of professional doctorates: information and communications technology that facilitates new forms of provision (for example, online delivery) that allow students around the world to access programmes remotely, and the unprecedented movement of people, particularly the increase in international students. For these myriad reasons, professional doctorates and EdD programmes are expanding their global reach (Wildy *et al.*, 2015).

EdD students tend to be experienced professionals. The programmes are primarily part-time to enable practitioners to continue in their professional roles. Programmes usually offer a structured learning environment, which has proved highly attractive to participants (Wellington and Sikes, 2006; Neumann, 2005). Because the participants are usually employed, 'the professional doctorate becomes, in such cases, less a qualification needed for employment than an upgrading of the individual's professional status' (Kot and Hendel, 2012: 349). In line with this, scholars note participant motivations are largely personal, with emphasis on the importance of the degree in boosting confidence, fostering reflexivity and spurring personal growth (Wellington and Sikes, 2006; Biddle, 2013; Scott *et al.*, 2004; Burgess and Wellington, 2010).

Unlike the PhD, which has a largely assumed format and set of objectives (that is, criteria for the dissertation, the viva examination and expanding the knowledge base), the EdD has variable objectives and formats that partly depend on the university and national context. It also has a highly variable structure and delivery (for example, coursework, dissertation and peer-reviewed publications) (Wildy *et al.*, 2015). Due to the variability of the degree objectives and format, confusion exists over what the degree is (Huisman and Nadoo, 2006; Kot and Hendel, 2012). Scholars have typically studied recognition of the degree within a particular national context (predominately the UK, USA, Canada and Australia), usually in relation to the PhD (for example, Neumann, 2005; Wildy *et al.*, 2015; Taysum, 2006), with few (if any) studies addressing EdD recognition in countries that do not offer it.

Now that we have a general understanding of the EdD from the academic literature, it is necessary to identify key issues in the Israeli situation that affect EdD recognition.

The Israeli HE system and background

While this study does not provide a comprehensive overview of Israeli society or its HE system, it is important to have a broad understanding of the system, particularly its troubled history with foreign HE providers and Israel's unique situation regarding its demographic challenges. The following section outlines these areas.

The first Israeli universities predate the founding of the state. In 1958, to insulate the university system from government influence and protect academic freedom, the CHE Law established an independent statutory corporation, the Council for Higher Education (CHE). The CHE has jurisdiction over Israeli HE, primarily regarding the rules and conditions for granting academic degrees, licences for foreign institutions (as of 1998), institutional accreditation measures, cooperation efforts between the institutions, and quality assurance (Israeli CHE, 2017). Through the Planning and Budgeting Committee (PBC), a CHE subcommittee responsible for planning and funding the HE system, the CHE has the authority to give proposals to the government to develop HE in line with the needs of society (EACEA, 2012).

In the mid-1980s and throughout the 1990s, Israel's HE system underwent a period of dramatic expansion, partially due to a combination of normal population growth and a large wave of immigration of highly educated Jews from the former Soviet Union (Yogev, 2000). In addition to this natural demand, there was also significant demand from public-sphere employees who received remuneration based on academic qualifications. Several solutions were devised to meet this demand, including the introduction of foreign providers, predominately British, operating in the country in a deregulated environment (Lieven and Martin, 2006). These programmes became a subject of fierce debate around quality standards and the HE system until the 1998 amendment of the CHE Law, which restricted the operations of foreign providers (Lieven and Martin, 2006). This failed experiment with deregulation in the HE sector and the legacy of substandard provision are largely what led to the MoE regulations of foreign degrees.

When addressing the recognition of foreign academic degrees, it is also important to recognize the challenge of vast immigrant absorption that Israel has faced since its creation in 1948. The creation of the state intended to provide a homeland to Jewish people from around the world. The immigration of Jews from diaspora communities was not only an invitation but also a necessity for the survival of the fledgling state. In line with this position, Israel has been, and continues to be, a country with a large immigrant population, with various waves of *aliyah*, or Jewish immigration to Israel, throughout its history and continuing to this day. The state has grappled with integrating large numbers of immigrants, who often have foreign academic

qualifications. These new citizens come from diverse countries around the world, not all with developed HE systems or similar standards, thus posing a challenge to integration and quality standards in Israel. A desire to integrate new immigrants into the workforce, and recognize their degrees and qualifications, has also served as an impetus for regulations regarding foreign degrees (Israeli Ministry of Education, n.d.).

Research approach, methods and evidence

This study employs a qualitative case study approach to investigate EdD recognition in Israel. A case study approach was deemed appropriate as it draws on multiple forms of evidence and 'investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the "case") in its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident' (Yin, 2013: 2). The case at hand is defined by a phenomenon (EdD recognition) in a location (Israel), and the two are intricately linked. Two methods were used: documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews. Documents were crucial to understanding the formal recognition of the EdD, and interviews were particularly suited to obtaining the personal accounts of experiences with recognition.

I solicited policy documents and evidence from sources within the MoE and CHE to understand the official regulations with regard to EdD recognition. Using the steps of Miles *et al.* (2013) as a guide, I coded documents thematically with an eye for the implications for the EdD. Afterwards, I generated a list of clarification questions for representatives of the agencies (for example: Is the EdD subject to the same regulations and process as all PhD degrees from foreign HEIs? How long does the recognition process take?). Email questionnaires and telephone conversations with staff from these agencies elaborated on details of the policies. We also discussed additional information not available from the policy documents (such as statistics and historical procedures).

I used university websites to explore human resource policies at universities and gain a better understanding of the EdD in this context. After reviewing the institutional policies, I contacted by email and telephone representatives in both the academic and administrative human resources departments of the six major public universities for clarification regarding the EdD.

I contacted employment professionals – one from an organization specializing in immigrant integration and two from private human resource recruitment agencies – to understand the employment prospects and actualities of EdD graduates better. I contacted six EdD graduates, all either personal contacts or people located on LinkedIn (an online professional networking service), to understand their experience within the system and recognition of the degree better, both through formal and informal channels.

In all contact with participants, I introduced myself as a doctoral student conducting an enquiry into EdD recognition in Israel. I highlighted that I would use the data in a publication and anonymise the sources.

Findings

The findings indicate three spheres of recognition for the EdD: public, private and academic. Two key policies that create these spheres and shape recognition of the EdD in Israel are: (1) the Regulations for Evaluation of Distance-Learning Academic Degrees and PhD Degrees (hereafter, the MoE regulations), which took effect in 2005 and, a division of the MoE (the Division for Evaluation of Foreign Academic Degrees), applies to evaluate foreign academic

credentials for the purpose of rank, salary, promotion and tender purposes in the public sphere; and (2) the CHE Law of 1958, Article 15, which grants autonomy to accredited HEIs to conduct their administrative and academic affairs within their budgets, particularly regarding the appointment and promotion of academic faculty. In the following sections, I will elaborate on the content of these regulations and their aims and implications for the EdD. I will then introduce the three spheres of recognition that are created by these regulations, and include EdD graduate experiences within these spheres.

The MoE regulations

The MoE, under the Department of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and External Relations, hosts the Division for Evaluation of Foreign and Academic Degrees, which has been responsible for the official recognition of degrees obtained at foreign academic institutions since 1973. The main purpose of the department is to assess the equivalency of degrees attained abroad to degrees obtained in Israeli HEIs for use in the public sphere. Specifically, the division notes the following three aims:

- giving opportunity to civil service employees to receive salary based on the degree diploma awarded to them
- assistance to new immigrants arriving in Israel to adjust to the labour market according to their educational skills
- assistance to the public service authorities on quality control of the degrees during administrative procedures, promotion and remuneration of employees (Israeli Ministry of Education, n.d.).

In these aims, the importance of the Israeli situation as detailed in the previous section is apparent, particularly in relation to new immigrants and quality assurance.

The MoE regulations regarding the equivalency of doctoral degrees from foreign institutions took effect in 2005. In the original and binding policy written in Hebrew, the phrase referring to doctorates is *Toar Shlishi*, or third-cycle degrees. In the English version of the policy, the translation is 'PhD', which in itself could be off-putting or confusing for new immigrants applying for recognition of their degree, as people can apply for the recognition of all doctorates outside the health fields (which have a parallel recognition process that the Ministry of Health oversees) through these same rules. Hence, these rules are also applicable to the EdD. The purpose of these regulations is to provide a framework for comparing and assessing the equivalency of foreign BA, MA and doctoral degrees to similar degrees that Israeli HEIs grant. Prior to these rules, there was a lack of formal assessment criteria and a wide variance in the quality and requirements for foreign degrees (Israeli State Comptroller, 2008). There was a growing concern regarding pervasive diploma fraud due to academic degrees of dubious quality or outright plagiarized degrees. People would earn or purchase these degrees primarily abroad or through international providers based in Israel (see, for example, Lieven and Martin, 2006; *Haaretz*, 2001; Sa'ar *et al.*, 2001). While these practices existed outside the public sphere as well, they were particularly problematic given the automatic remuneration in the public sphere based on academic degrees. Therefore, in August 2000, due to a high number of applications filed for doctoral and also distance-learning degrees from foreign institutions, and, importantly, in the wake of criminal, civil and administrative court proceedings, the attorney general's office decided to cease considering these degrees for equivalency until standardized regulations were formulated (Israeli State Comptroller, 2008). This persisted from August 2000 until the approval of the regulations for doctoral degrees and distance-learning degrees in 2005. This troubled

history of the recognition of foreign degrees in the public sphere must surely have had a great influence on the content of the regulations.

The MoE regulations lay out the various criteria that a doctorate must satisfy to gain recognition in Israel. These criteria highlight issues that the MoE identified as problematic in the past relating to degrees from foreign entities: the accreditation of the universities and their degrees; the language of the thesis; the duration of attendance; the level of the thesis supervisor and examiners; the stipulation that the design of the degree programmes abroad must not be specifically for Israeli students; and the importance of a local Israeli expert committee to ensure the candidate produced the thesis. It is important to note that the fulfilment of all criteria is necessary to obtain equivalency. Particularly important for the EdD within these regulations is the length and scope of the EdD thesis, which, in comparison to a PhD in education from an Israeli HEI, might be lacking according to the regulations. EdD programmes may have shorter theses and scope due to the use of coursework and other assignments during the degree, which could be grounds for rejection of equivalency. Additionally, the stipulation regarding the rank of the supervisor and examiners may also be problematic in the context of the EdD. The required rank – that of a tenured academic faculty member – may not be the norm in all HEIs with EdD programmes, which may use supervisors who have extensive practitioner research and practical experience but do not hold academic contracts, rank, or tenure.

In addition to the criteria for equivalency, the regulations note that there are costs for the above process, and, by all accounts, it is a lengthy process. While it was not possible to obtain current statistics, an Israeli State Comptroller report (2008) notes that overall the division receives about 7,000 applications for recognition annually, with approximately 6 per cent, or about 420 applications, for doctoral equivalency. The same report notes a wait time of about six months, and my most recent enquiries elicited the email response from a senior source within the MoE that it is 'a lengthy process, and can take many months'.

The CHE Law

While the MoE regulations would lead one to believe that there are essentially two spheres of recognition, public and private, there is a further separation – that of the academic sphere. Amendments to the CHE Law over the years have kept pace with the changing face of HE. There have been 11 amendments over the past 40 years, perhaps most notably those in the 1990s, which introduced the academic colleges (*michlalot*) and the regulations that restrict foreign provider operations in Israel. Of particular relevance for EdD recognition, the CHE Law, through Article 15, grants each university the liberty to assess the needs and requirements of its institutions (for example, the balance of teaching and research) and make their own policies regarding the appointment of academic and administrative staff within their budgets. While this law could have created two additional EdD recognition spheres outside the public and private (those of university administrator and academic), it actually created just one additional sphere, that of the academic, because the universities opted to use the MoE recognition for administrative staff (Israeli State Comptroller, 2008).

Although according to the CHE Law there is institutional autonomy, in practice, it is a grey area. While Article 15 allows universities to appoint academic lecturers at their discretion, CHE committees on a national level award promotions to the levels of associate and full professor. Additionally, while universities may make their own decisions regarding appointments, the PBC has its own formula for allocating funding to institutions, which prioritizes research (Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka, 2010). In this same vein, there is wide convergence in the academic sphere regarding the qualifications required for hiring academic faculty for tenure-track positions

(minimum doctoral qualification) (EACEA, 2012), and there is precedent for CHE investigations into faculty appointments based on suspicious doctoral qualifications (Heruti-Sover, 2016). Nevertheless, similar to private-sphere employees, universities rarely (if ever) ask academics to produce an equivalency document from the MoE for foreign degrees obtained abroad. Universities instead judge them on various criteria, usually in a diffused manner, set by the faculties or departments to which they apply. Universities tend to judge academics on: the combined strength and quality of their academic qualifications; further research experience (that is, postdoctoral positions); publications; and teaching experience. While some universities I surveyed have permanent faculty in their education department with EdD degrees, these were rare exceptions. These professors usually came from top universities (Columbia University Teachers College or Harvard University) and were among the older faculty, or were even emeritus professors. This disparity may therefore be a generational issue, with universities preferring, or possibly requiring, new faculty members to have PhDs as opposed to EdDs. While there are *third-space* professionals, or those creating new territory between academic and administrative fields, blurring the traditional dichotomous academic and administrative spheres (Whitchurch, 2008), in the case of Israeli universities, it appears that positions either have a definition of academic (which usually carries the expectation of teaching, research, or some combination thereof), or administrative. It also appears that the appropriate regulations regarding the requirement for official degree recognition are then in play. Academic contractor positions with fixed-term contracts, which are widespread in Israel (Robinson, 2010), and teaching positions without research obligations (for example, teachers of English as a foreign language) are also a part of the academic area. Therefore, these positions do not routinely require MoE recognition.

Spheres of recognition

Due in large part to the aforementioned policies, a three-sphere system has developed in Israel regarding recognition of the EdD:

- The *public sphere*, in which those who work in the civil service in Israel, including teachers, university administrators and others in the public school system, must apply for official recognition of all degrees obtained abroad for purposes of rank, salary, promotion and tender applications. Only the MoE can provide recognition of the EdD in this sphere. Such recognition usually entitles the candidate to additional remuneration or other privileges. Despite my endeavours, I was unable to interview any EdD graduates who received formal recognition of the degree. This may be due to the size and composition of the sample of interview participants; all EdD graduates interviewed were immigrants to Israel as opposed to native Israelis. Immigrants might be less likely to work in the public sphere, as one EdD graduate noted:

    I'm an olah [new immigrant]. I barely speak Hebrew. I will never work for the government so I doubt I would ever try [to have the degree recognized] (Director, gap-year programme).

- The *private sphere*, in which EdD graduates present their academic qualifications and other skills and experience to potential employers, who seldom (if ever) ask for official equivalency certification and therefore tend to forgo MoE recognition. Four EdD graduates interviewed were employed in the private sphere:

> To be honest, I never even tried to get my degree recognized. I just assumed it wasn't possible [since it is not a PhD] and I don't need it [formal recognition] anyway (Director, educational tour company).

> My EdD involved a lot of coursework; I don't think it would be recognized although I never tried – the bureaucracy, wait times? Why bother? (Director, American–Israeli educational exchange programme).

While two graduates expressed doubt that their degrees would be recognized formally, none of the graduates felt the need to have their EdD formally recognized and MoE recognition was not sought. Moreover, all graduates indicated that while the EdD was not required in their current positions in the private sphere, it was considered helpful in securing employment. One graduate noted:

> Although it [doctorate] was not a requirement for the job, I think the fact that I had the EdD helped me get the job. It was a bonus (Guidance counsellor, private high school).

•   The *academic sphere*, in which employees rarely have to produce an MoE equivalency document. Instead, academics are judged on various criteria, usually in a diffused manner, set by the faculties or departments to which they apply. Two EdD graduates interviewed for the study worked in this sphere:

> The programme [I taught in] belongs to the Centre for Continuing Education of the university. Therefore I am not a formal part of the university staff … I am an adjunct professor … Regarding my EdD and the Ministry of Education, I have to say that I didn't come across that need [for formal recognition]. Wherever I've worked, I submit[ted] my Columbia University diploma and that was enough (Adjunct lecturer, universities and academic colleges; owner, private coaching practice).

> I was promoted several years ago and it was dependent on having a doctorate. No one ever asked me about EdD or PhD or for [MoE] recognition. As long as I could put 'Dr' in front of my name that's all that mattered … but I think the standard teaching–research positions are different. If you want that career, you really need the PhD – and tons of publications (Head, academic English department).

The views expressed by these two EdD graduates working in the academic sphere confirmed that the MoE regulations were not used in academic hiring. Furthermore, their comments indicate that the EdD may be sufficient in adjunct or teaching positions, but it may not be sufficient for traditional tenured academic positions.

Hierarchy of degrees

In addition to the three spheres, an issue that I constantly encountered was a lack of basic knowledge of the degree: What is an EdD? Knowledge of the qualification was low, even among those who I expected to have familiarity (for example, employment professionals and MoE employees). In many circumstances, the EdD requires an explanation, and is 'always in juxtaposition to a PhD' (EdD graduate, private sphere). While this may be common elsewhere, the fact that Israel does not offer EdDs likely exacerbates the problem. The idea of the PhD as the gold standard is perhaps stronger in the Israeli context than in other countries, where officially the two coexist as equal, third-cycle degrees (for example, in Australia and the UK) and this may impact on the recognition of the EdD.

Implications

In many ways, the academic sphere resembles the private sphere regarding EdD recognition. Both forgo the MoE recognition process in favour of basing recognition on a combination of the academic degree, skill set and experience required for the position; there is a looser connection between academic degree and remuneration. In contrast, public sphere recognition of the degree rests solely on the MoE criteria outlined, and additional remuneration accompanies such recognition.

Essentially, one group – those in the public sphere – must routinely undergo the MoE recognition process if they would like to receive the remuneration and tangible benefits of the degree. Another group – the private and academic sphere – is largely exempt from this process. The regulations principally stem from a desire to combat low-quality, even fraudulent, degrees that became problematic in the wake of a neo-liberal experiment with the deregulation of the HE sector in the 1990s. However, this type of recognition system perpetuates inequalities, and privileges those who have the time, financial means and savvy to navigate a cumbersome bureaucracy – in short, those who are already in a place of advantage. Rigid regulations may also limit access to and movement between spheres, again burdening those with the least advantage. Finally, the EdD tends to be compared to a PhD and placed in a lesser position. This view, combined with the vastly variable form of the EdD, suggests that the MoE regulations may adversely affect EdD recognition more than other degrees. Despite my interest in the EdD – particularly for the focus on practice, flexible delivery and cohort structure – the implication of decreased mobility between spheres motivated me to enrol in a PhD programme.

Limitations and areas for further research

This study has a limited focus: understanding the recognition of the EdD in Israel. As with any study using policy documents as evidence, it is important to note that authorities did not create the documents for research purposes (Robson, 2011). In this case, the purpose of the regulations was fairness in standardizing qualifications for rank, salary and job tenders in the public sphere. Further enquiry would strengthen the study, and it is possible that there are more areas of recognition than this study outlines. Understanding of the recognition could have been deepened by incorporating the views of academic department heads and committees who make academic hiring and tenure decisions, and by engaging more with third-space professionals in the university context. More interviews with EdD graduates who work in the public and university spheres, or who have gone through the formal MoE recognition process, would have been helpful. Additionally, at this time, the MoE was unable to provide updated statistics regarding the number of applications and their outcomes, or, indeed, any record specifically for professional doctorates, including the EdD. Finally, Israel has a highly stratified HE system, and this study only examines universities – first-tier institutions that are themselves stratified (Yogev, 2000). Possibly, the academic teaching colleges (second-tier institutions) have a different approach to EdD recognition; however, due to the continual process of 'universitifaction' – the second-tier Israeli institutions striving to emulate the first-tier institutions and adopt their practices and strategies (Yemini *et al.*, 2017) – the second-tier institutions may view the EdD similarly.

Conclusion

While it might be assumed that EdD recognition in Israel is quite low, the reality is nuanced; different spheres (public, private and academic) recognize the degree differently. The CHE Law and MoE regulations shape these spheres and are largely the result of a failed experiment with

neo-liberal deregulation of HE in the 1990s. The current system of regulation, while aiming to address issues of quality for academic qualifications in a country with a diverse and large immigrant population, has also resulted in a bureaucratic system that perpetuates inequalities.

While this study fleshes out the spheres of recognition of the EdD in Israel, it also serves more generally as an interesting case study in two areas: (1) the aftermath and regulatory backlash of failed free-market deregulation in HE, with particular emphasis on the effect of such regulations on foreign academic qualifications; and (2) the recognition of the EdD in a country that does not offer the qualification. Furthermore, it serves to open a discussion on recognition of the EdD in a global era. In the context of increasing online provision and the unprecedented movement of people, how can we balance the need to protect our societies from predatory diploma mills and fraud on the one hand, with the need to integrate people and recognize qualifications on the other?

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Notes on the contributor

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Burnard, P., Dragovic, T., Ottewell, K. and Lim, W.M. (2018) 'Voicing the professional doctorate and the researching professional's identity: Theorizing the EdD's uniqueness'. *London Review of Education*, 16 (1), 40–55.

Chua, S.M.J. (2018) 'Being written: Thinking the normative in the EdD'. *London Review of Education*, 16 (1), 56–62.

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Hawkes, D. and Yerrabati, S. (2018) 'A systematic review of research on professional doctorates'. *London Review of Education*, 16 (1), 10–27.

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