

**WORLD'S EDUCATIONAL ISSUES, POLICIES AND RESEARCH IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: CHALLENGES FOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATIONS IN EDUCATION- MEXICAN PERSPECTIVE**

**Teresa Bracho**

Education is changing all over the world and we will be seeing - and perhaps even promoting- more changes in the benefit of the students, the educational systems and the society as a whole. Some of this changes comes from the demands that social systems are placing in education ( the demands over quality and pertinence of educational knowledge), some might be explained by the complex changes that arises from the educational system itself (=the complexities derived from the expansion of educational systems, complexities from the administrative-labour organisations, national political conditions, the rigidity of educational system, etc.); many others comes from the radical technological advances going on, and the speed of change in knowledge and its ability to impact social changes. But also we should try to recognise how we, as scholars, had put some other demands on the educational systems, or if we had failed to do so. At least in the case of my country, the organisation of research in education is also facing the consequences of the expansion of national research systems and the growing institutions devoted to research in education. As far as I can tell, from the Mexican case, since COMIE was created (1993), we are facing growing numbers of researchers, graduate courses on educational research, organisations doing educational research, social organisations interested in the educational arena.

What can we say of our association of educational researchers in these 20 years of work? What are our main strengths and challenges?

1. We have been very successful in our task of bettering off the diffusion of scientific knowledge in the area; but we had not been able to seriously impact in the production of knowledge.

2. We have been also doing well making decision making actors and agencies taking into account the voices of experts, but not necessarily impacting the decisions taken.

3. We also have been an excellent channel to communicate with students and teachers in Mexico about the results of educational research (within the biannual National Congresses). But we had done fewer efforts to strengthen academic and research links between our members.

We are now a prestigious association, recognized for its moderation in political disputes, the scrupulous selection procedure of its members, and its commitment to rigorous scientific standards, and to educational development.

(C) What we are now promoting from COMIE is the development of a new set of databases that might face the challenges mentioned above?

Mainly we are working on two projects: One refers to a data base with results of educational research that may be continuously updated by our members, and that can be useful for reviews, policy papers, researchers and students. The other one refers to the knowledge of the States educational systems, and might be a starting point for new comparative studies. If these projects can be developed and financed during this year, we expect to expand the concept to create an international data base, starting with Latin America.

In the next years, COMIE will concentrate in few significant objectives implied in the projects mentioned briefly: first, strengthening its presence in the states of the country, and secondly, create and activate our relationship with international organizations with common goals. As knowledge and development are increasingly global, so are the social changes. I believe that our strength must be based on the openness of knowledge, support research efforts of our partners, and strengthen our national and international relations.