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# International Journal of Educational Development

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## Editorial

This volume of the International Journal of Educational Development contains 19 articles. Although they come to us as individual manuscripts and pass through the review process independently the articles in volume 61 the majority (14) can be grouped around three categories, with five others containing a variety of issues and perspectives. The largest category (9 articles) contains reports of *disappointments* --- educational interventions which have fallen short of their expectations. The second category is most unusual, and illustrates an important point about our goals as a journal. This second category (three articles) contains the results of research based on *education history*. The third category (two articles) contain reports of an increasingly important line of investigation, that of *early reading results from low income countries*. The last category (5 articles) contain a wide variety of important issues and perspectives. These 19 articles illustrate the fact that the number of candidate manuscripts received by the IJED is climbing rapidly. On the other hand, a large percentage of candidate articles are rejected in a desk review. They are not sent out for a formal review by external reviewers. Our objective is to reduce this percentage and to do so, the editorial will end with a short set of suggestions for the author of future manuscripts.

*Educational Disappointments.* Some have suggested that the hiring of teachers by local schools would establish strong relationships with local communities and stimulate parental participation in the schooling process. However, in the article titled: "School-based Teacher Hiring and Achievement Inequality: A Comparative Perspective" Seong Won Han analyzed the results from 34 countries and concludes that school-based hiring is associated with a larger gap in the distribution of teacher quality and exacerbates achievement differences between rich and poor students. Does this suggest that centralized control is superior? Not necessarily. More centralized control of teacher cost, quality and distribution is the subject of the paper titled: "The Political Economy of Teacher Management Reform in Indonesia," by Andrew Rosser and Mohamad Fahmi. They find that more central control supported Indonesia's 'predatory elites' by accumulating teacher resources for themselves, and by reinforcing political control and patronage rather than improving learning outcomes.

In South Africa, many Black African students are the first in their families to attend university. Their transition to university culture and expectations have been assisted by means of 'peer facilitators'. However, in their article titled: "Exploring the Recruitment and Training of Peer Facilitators in a South African University," Magdaline Tangwe and Cosmas Maphosa find that their backgrounds did not adequately represent the backgrounds of the students being facilitated and the depth of facilitator preparation varied widely from one department to another.

The flood of 4.8 million Syrian refugees has affected many countries in the region. How might refugee children be schooled? One answer is supplied by the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) which sponsors school programs for Syrian Refugees in Turkey, Iraq,

Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. Programs in the latter two countries were analyzed in an article titled: "Regional Collaboration to Strengthen Education for Syrian Refugees and Nationals in Arabic-Speaking Host Countries," by Louisa Visconti and Diane Gal. The program falls short of its aspirations due to political instability, uncertainty over where refugees will reside in the future, and weaknesses in local education systems. They recommend a standardized K-12 curricula in STEM subjects, standard accreditation requirements, region-wide databases in evidence-based teaching practices and improved links to local employers.

Curriculum is acknowledged to be a critical conduit for engendering constructive social attitudes of children. However, some curriculum reforms have created the opposite. In the paper titled: "Dynamics of Gender Justice, Conflict and Social Cohesion: Analyzing Educational Reforms in Pakistan," Naureen Durrani and Anjum Aalai find that recent reforms have perpetuated gender injustice and have helped foster conflict. Similarly, in Botswana, curriculum has failed to perform its intended social cohesion functions. In the article titled: "There is Still Peace. There are No Wars. Prioritizing Unity Over Diversity in Botswana's Social Studies Policies and Practices and the Implications for Positive Peace," Bethany Mulimbi and Sarah Dryden-Peterson find that the curriculum is focused solely on unity and the avoidance of armed conflict normed around the culture and language of the dominant ethnic group to the exclusion of all others.

It is often suggested that non-government schools would stimulate constructive competition with public schools. The theory is tested in Australia, Portugal and Spain in the article titled: "Factors Associated with Private-Public School Performance: Analysis of TALIS-PISA Link Data," Marcos Delprato and Amita Chudgar find that where competition did have effect it largely benefited high performers in private schools in Spain and Australia. They conclude that adopting private school practices to improve learning outcomes of low income children is of limited utility.

It is often suggested that parental education is associated with higher levels of student performance in school. In the article titled: "Determinants of Schooling and Academic Achievements: Comparisons Between People with and Without Disabilities in India," Takaki Takeda and Kamal Lamichane, discover that mother's education is associated with increased student achievement among students with disabilities, but that father's education had little or no effect.

Human capital theory holds that schooling leads to greater economic benefits for the individual and the society. However, in an article titled: "Making Sense of Low Private Returns to Education in MENA: A Human Capital Approach," Ian Kingsbury finds that MENA has lower economic returns to education investments than any other region. He explains this because of the overt religious orthodoxy, poor educational performance, low rule of law and the reliance on the export of primary products for national incomes.

## 1. Education History

History is a long-standing, legitimate approach for acquiring insight into education. This journal wishes to encourage it; three articles in Volume 61 do so. In the article titled: "Heath and Education During Industrialization: Evidence from Early Twentieth Century Japan", Kota Ogasawara uses household surveys following WWI to explore the possible effects of parental health shocks on female school attendance over the next twenty years. It is discovered that maternal illness reduced the female school attendance rate by 29%, that paternal illness reduced female school attendance by 32%, and that part of the post WWII economic growth was made possible by human capital investments twenty years earlier.

Citizenship is supposed to be a construct of how children are raised and educated. But how have early decisions in a nation's history affected the outcome? In the article titled: "Post-Colonial Dilemmas in the Construction of Ghanaian Citizenship Education: Nationality, Human Rights and Social Inequalities," Madeleine Arnot, Leslie Casely-Hayford and Thomas Yeboah return to decisions made in the 1950's. They believe that compromises were made which may have limited the effect of African models in lieu of Western emphasis on general principals of human rights, individual independence, and economic development.

Electives are a standard element of American higher education, and increasingly a characteristic of higher education globally. How and where did the concept of electives originate? In the article titled: "U.S. Higher Education Reform: Origins and Impact of Student Curricular Choice," Robert Elliott and Valerie Paton track the concept to Charles Elliott's inaugural speech in 1869 as Harvard's president and the subsequent changes put into place under his leadership. They analyze the benefits which these have yielded for higher education in general.

## 2. Early Reading in Low Income Countries

It is hard to learn to read when classrooms have no books and the amount spent on non-salary inputs is one 300<sup>th</sup> of what is spent in the typical classroom in an OECD country (Heyneman and Fuller, 1989). The results of such underinvestment are the subject of two papers. In the paper titled: "Assessing Literacy and Numeracy among Primary School Students: A Pilot Survey in Rural Bangladesh," John Richards and Shahidul Islam find that the percentage of students who are able to 'work at grade' is 30% in reading and 18% in arithmetic. These results are parallel across government and NGO schools.

In Indonesia a reading assessment is used to divide children by skill level. In the paper titled: "Using Early Grade Reading Assessment Data for Targeted Instructional Support: Learning Profiles and Instructional Needs in Indonesia," Jonathan Stern, Margaret Dubeck and Anna Dick-Guggenheim demonstrate how such an assessment, even with very low performing children, can be utilized to target specialized pedagogy and curriculum to raise performance. They suggest moreover, that this technique may be utilized across low and middle-income countries.

This final category consists of a variety of themes and perspectives. In the article titled: "The Brazilian Higher Education Evaluation Model: SINAES Sui Generis?" by Cleger Pereira, Joaquim Filipe Ferraz Esteves Arujo, and Maria de Lourdes Machado, describe an innovative system of higher education accreditation. A second is titled: "Teaching in a Conflict Settings: Dimensions of Subjective Wellbeing in Arab Teachers living in Israel and Palestine," by Guido Veronese, Alessandro Pepe, Jamal Dagdukee and Shaher Yaghi. They describe the percep-

tions of Arab teachers living and working in Israel and Palestine. A third focuses on the transition to employment. Titled: "Education and Transition to Work: Evidence from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Nepal," by Shuang Chen who argues that additional schooling in Vietnam and Cambodia speed up the transition to stable, long term employment. A fourth focuses on teachers in Sri Lanka. In their article titled: "School-Level Resource Allocation and Education Outcomes in Sri Lanka, Ashani Abayasekara and Nisha Arunatilake find that student performance is associated with more experienced and committed teachers. A final article by Wen Wen, Die Hu and Jie Hao titled: "International Students' Experiences in China: Does the Planned Reverse Mobility Work?" focuses on the strengths and limitations of foreign students studying in China

## 3. What IJED Looks for in New Manuscripts

Throughout the world, the pressure in universities to publish has become standard. Many journals report increases in the number of candidate manuscripts. Each year we receive between 800 and 900. Approximately 15% are accepted. Why are others not accepted? How can future authors lower the risk that their manuscripts will be rejected?

About half of the manuscripts are rejected in a desk review prior to being sent out for external review. A desk rejection is usually for the following reasons:

- the topic of the manuscript does not fit with the aims, scope and readership described on the IJED website.
- The manuscript does not explain the implications for policy
- Or when explained, the policy implications are simplistic
- Flaws in the study design, or lack of satisfactory demonstration that findings are supported by research instead of opinion.
- Inadequate preparation in style. The IJED is read by practitioners who value transparent language without unnecessary technical jargon
- Poor writing and organization
- Lack of nesting the topic in the literature on the same topic

Aside from these common reasons for rejection it might be useful to reiterate that we look for manuscripts which go further than these standards. The IJED looks for originality, questions rarely asked, novel techniques, uncommon or even counter-intuitive findings. Many manuscripts are rejected not because they make mistakes, but because they teach the reader nothing new. In terms of techniques and disciplines the IJED is interested in insight. Insight may emerge from any discipline and any analytic technique. Three historical articles are highlighted in this particular volume. But insight may emerge from sociology, psychology, anthropology or development economics. Insight can emerge from large scale survey data or from case studies. In our mind, the key ingredient is whether the manuscript demonstrates an understanding of the implications of the findings for other locations and can draw attention to the importance of the findings well beyond the location of where the data were collected.

## References

- Heyneman, S.P. and Fuller, B. (1989), "Third World School Quality: Current Collapse, Future Potential," *Educational Researcher*, vol. 18, no. 2, (March) pp. 12-19.

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