



Editorial



This issue of the IJED covers eight divergent but equally important topics. The first is the quality of teaching in higher education. Because of the revolution in pedagogical technologies and the every-day use of the internet to access reading and library resources, what is expected to occur in a classroom has changed dramatically. No longer is it necessary to use class contact time to relay information when that information can be acquired from multiple sources. But has the time in classrooms actually changed? In the article by Omar Ben-Ayed, Hedia Lahmar and Raoudha Kammoun titled: “Class Time Utilization in Business Schools in Tunisia,” the authors discover that class time utilization has not changed to match the change in technologies. They find that less than 55% of the time was actually used for teaching (as opposed to lecturing) and perhaps as a result only a third of the students actually attend classes. The authors, quite rightly, see this as disturbing.

Higher education in most countries is now diversified in terms of student age. Non-traditional older students are now the norm. But have universities changed sufficiently to effectively integrate non-traditional students? In the article by Peace Buhwamatsiko Tumuheki, Jacques Zeelen and George Openjuru titled: “Towards a Conceptual Framework for Developing Capabilities of ‘New’ Types of Students Participating in Higher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa” Makerere University in Uganda was used as a case illustration. They conclude that improving only the institutional environment is insufficient to effectively integrate non-traditional students. They argue that the socio-cultural environment, family and work environments also need to make adjustments.

For the last several decades it has been widely held that school systems would be more effective if managerial control were situated at the school itself. Efforts have been made to make certain that this shift in management could occur. But many efforts have failed and schools have ended up being managed in traditional ways. What accounts for these failures? Is there a way to predict which school-based management efforts might succeed and which might fail? This is the question raised by Alejandro Jorge Ganimian in the article titled: “Why Do Some School-Based Management Reforms Survive While Others are Reversed? The Cases of Honduras and Guatemala”. The author concludes that two factors can predict failure or success: (i) the scope (breadth) of the reform and (ii) the degree of government investment. He says that ‘these two factors determine the extent to which a school-based-management reform is vulnerable to events that can bring about its termination, such as changes in government, union strength or parental pressure.’

It has been noted before in the IJED that low income families choose fee-paying private schools over free public schools,¹ but what to ‘do’ about this continues to be a subject of some debate. In the article by Jayanti Kumari titled: “Public-Private Partnerships in Education: An Analysis with special Reference to the Indian School Education System” the author notes that governments have approached this issue with programs of vouchers, subsidies, capitation grants, stipends and contracts. He argues though that families, service providers and governments should all be held accountable and that ‘partnership contracts’ between governments and private providers may hold out the best strategy, at least for India.

Bilingual education has long been a subject of debate. Its goal of effectively integrating students with minority language mother tongues has sometimes been found to be compromised by isolating minority language students and hence solidifying social differences. In the article by Lucrecia Santibanez titled: “The Indigenous Achievement Gap in Mexico: The Role of Teacher Policy Under Bilingual Education,” the author finds that Intercultural Bilingual Education programs are associated with higher test scores of indigenous students when the ‘model is implemented as intended’. It is particularly important to recruit teachers who meet the language requirements. However, if governments are not able to recruit teachers with the necessary qualifications, bilingual education programs are likely to fail.

Teachers make up a significant portion of the salaried labor force and the level of their remuneration continues to be a significant issue. In their article titled: “Measuring the Relative Pay of School Teachers in Latin America,” Alejandra Mizala and Hugo Nopo argue that teachers in Latin America are underpaid by comparison to other professionals and technicians with equivalent training.

It is widely known that higher education institutions play a role in providing upward mobility to students fortunate enough to attend. But do students see higher education in these terms? And what are the implications if students do not, if they see their institutions as not providing opportunities for up-ward mobility. Amra Sabic-El-Rayess in her article titled: “Merit Matters: Student Perceptions of Faculty Quality and Reward,” finds that when students are pessimistic about the upward mobility potential of

¹ S.P. Heyneman and J. S. Stern (2014) “Low cost Non-Government Schools for the Poor: What Public Policy Is Appropriate?” *International Journal of Education Development*, vol. 35, pp. 3–15.

their institutions it is often because the students see their faculty and their institutions as being corrupted. For instance, if students believe that their faculty have been promoted as a result of corruption they view (perhaps correctly) the more senior faculty as being incompetent. This, in turn, affects student confidence that their institution will assist them with occupational advancement.² She concludes that ‘moving away from merit-based mobility can have broad social consequences particularly in developing countries that are poorly equipped to react to such digressions.’

Today civil conflict and government collapse are a normal part of life, and the effective provision of health and education services under these extreme conditions have becoming an increasingly important part of the Comparative and International Education as a field. Patricia Justino, in her article titled: “Supply and Demand Restrictions to Education in Conflict-Affected Countries: New

Research and Future Agenda,” describes what she classifies the factors which influence whether schooling can be effective in war-torn environments. Supply side factors include the destruction of infrastructure and resources, displacement and distributional effects. Demand-side factors include poverty, health shocks, low returns to investment in schooling, child soldiering, and the fear and trauma resulting from armed violence. The article points to ways of assessing these factors and so anticipate the likely success of programs to re-supply schooling in circumstances of armed conflict and institutional collapse.

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² Corrupt institutions of higher education have been found to effectively lower the occupational futures of their students. S.P. Heyneman, K. H. Anderson and N. Nuraliyeva (2008) “The Cost of Corruption in Higher Education,” *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 51 (No. 2), pp. 1–25.