



Highlights of volume 81

Education and International Organizations is the first topic raised in volume 81. Seventy-two years ago United Nations assigned UNESCO the task of managing issues of education. However, the ambition reflected in the agency's terms of reference has not been easy to fulfill. Some suggest that the agency is driven more by political issues than technical (Burnett, 2011) and it may be time to fix its 'broken architecture' (Burnett, 2019). Others have suggested that UNESCO's lack of resources is crippling¹ and what resources it has, have not been allocated effectively (Heyneman, 1999). Moreover, unlike other UN agencies, UNESCO has not adjusted itself to the needs of potential supporters (Heyneman 2003). Hence, unlike other UN agencies UNESCO has not been significantly augmented by non-budgetary sources of income (Heyneman, 2011).²

In Volume 81 the article titled: "The Power Struggle Over Education in Developing Countries: The Case of the UNESCO-World Bank Co-Operative Program, 1964–1989," by Maren Elfert provides a detailed look into UNESCO's historical record. FAO, WHO and UNESCO provided a 'home' to technical staff so that they might perform work on behalf of the World Bank. The history of UNESCO's cooperative program, and its eventual demise, is an illustration of the problems of imbalance between the two organizations, and perhaps also the weaknesses within UNESCO, as opposed to other UN agencies.

Language of Instruction is a long-standing topic of attention. The assumption has been that the mother tongue is superior for the acquisition of formal curricular material and for a student to express emotions and feelings. This latter is challenged by authors Kari Spernes and Rose Ruto-Korir in their article titled: "Multilingualism and Curriculum: A Study of How Multilingual Learners in Rural Kenya Use their Languages to Express Emotions". Contrary to expectations, using an experimental design they find that children do not prefer to use their mother tongues to convey emotional stories.

Curriculum Design has been an important arena for education research since its beginning in the 19th Century. One common problem has been to determine the appropriate levels of depth and breadth. Often the ambitions and expectations of curriculum planners have outpaced the time and resources available to deliver the curriculum effectively. In the article titled: "The Tension Between Curriculum Coverage and Quality Learning the Experiences of South African Teachers," authors Carol Bertram, Carol Cynthia Nonhlanhla Mthiyane, and Jaqueline Naidoo discover that curricula programs in South Africa fail because they are over-designed, well beyond the capacities of both teachers and pupils.

Higher Education in the Former Soviet Union is a unique source of education research. Until the end of the Soviet Union, higher education

was structured and managed identically as a single undifferentiated system. But when the Soviet Union split into independent countries higher education diverged into 15 different systems. Why did it diverge in one direction or another? What predicts the commonality or differences of these directions? This grand natural experiment is reflected by two papers. In "Stability, Performance and Innovation Orientation of a Higher Education Funding Model in Kazakhstan," Hans Vossensteyn, Ali Ait Si Mhamed, Rita Kasa, Matthew Hartley and Jussi Kivisto find that the Ministry of Education's choice of funding model is deeply disliked but faculty are simply resigned to it. In the article titled: "Analysis of Key Factors of Influence on Scientometric Indicators of Higher Educational Institutions of Ukraine," Akbash Kateryna, Natalia Pasichnyk and Renat Rizhniak find that the criteria on which universities are evaluated for their research productivity create deep distortions and should instead be weighted by the university's category and the ratio of available research and teaching staff.

Education and social mobility is a universal concern since education is thought to be a principal avenue for reducing social inequality and providing a mechanism for acquiring social cohesion. Four papers in volume 81 speak to this issue. In "How Far the Apple Falls from the Tree: Intergenerational Transmission of Educational Attainment in Indonesia," Syed Hassan Raza and Ugur Aytun ask whether fathers with higher levels of educational attainment produce sons with higher educational attainment. The answer is not straight-forward. At the lower end of the paternal education spectrum the answer is yes; at the higher end of the paternal educational spectrum, the answer is no.

Are the children of migrants advantaged by the additional resources acquired from remittances? In the article titled: "International Migration and Remittance Effects on School Enrolment of Children Staying Behind: The Evidence from Tajikistan," Enerelt Murakami finds that migration is associated with a decrease of 10 percent in enrollment and not advantaged by remittances. In the article titled: "Higher Education and Family Background: Which Really Matters to an Individual's Socio-Economic Status in China," JZ 'Joe' Zhou, Yongmei Hu, and Yun Xing find that the influence of an individual's higher education is greater than the influence of family social status in determining an individual's socio-economic status. Lastly, in their article titled: "Gains from Female Education in Rural Bangladesh: A Multidimensional Approach," Tomomi Tanaka, Kazushi Takahashi and Kejiro Otsuka find that there is not a great deal of difference in labor force participation because of female education directly, but there is indirectly because more educated females tend to marry more educated males. Not the ideal source of influence perhaps.

¹ UNESCO's operational budget for education is the equivalent of about half the operational budget of a typical research university (Heyneman, 2011, p. 313).

² External sources of income were the equivalent of 0.6 of the regular budget in UNESCO; about 0.9 of the regular budget in FAO, 1.3 of the regular budget in ILO and 5.5 of the regular budget in WHO (Heyneman, 2011, p. 313).

External influences on schooling are common concerns among those responsible for making education policy. Four papers address these concerns. In the paper titled: “The Negative Impact of Violence on Children's Education and Well-Being: Evidence from Northern Nigeria,” Anne Smiley, Wael Moussa, Robert Ndamobissi and Azuka Menkiti find that children who experience any kind of violence are more likely to leave school, have reduced learning, and feel unsafe when traveling to and from the classroom and their home.

In the paper titled: “What's Faith Got to Do with It? A Scoping Study on Local Faith Communities Supporting Child Development and Learning,” Anthony D’Agostino, Nikhit D’Sa and Neil Boothby find that early child development faith communities are able to provide early child development skills before and in parallel to formal schooling.

In the paper titled: “Exploring the Power and Influence of the Private Sector and For-Profit Philanthropy on Educational Development During Pandemic Times,” Lara Patil finds that the non-government organizations are increasingly important for the facilitation of education during the times of COVID-19 in which public schools are often closed.

And lastly, in the paper titled: “Modelling the Long-Run Learning Impact of the COVID-19 Learning Shock: Actions to (more than)

Mitigate Loss” Michelle Kaffenberger provides an estimate of the long term cognitive loss due to COVID-19. By calibrating a ‘pedagogical production model’ she estimates that the typical pupil will lose more than a full year's worth of learning from a three-month closure of schools because they will be behind when schools reopen and will be further behind as time goes on.

References

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