



## Editorial



*Religion, Education and Development.* In addition to the invited essay, three articles in volume 62 pertain to religious issues. Rohen d'Alglepierre and Arthur Bauer explore why some families choose traditional Quranic schools and others choose the more formal Arab Islamic schools. Titled: "The Choice of Arab-Islamic Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: findings from a comparative study," their article includes findings from Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Gambia, Burkina-Faso, Senegal, Chad, Somalia and Comoros. Essentially, they discover that the choice of school is dictated by the level of family poverty with low income families choosing traditional Quranic schools. They also conclude that traditional Quranic schools transmit important knowledge, but that children from low-income families have often been excluded from the more formal Arabic-Islamic schools.

Michelle Kuenzi examines the relationship between type of education (adult, Koranic, and formal state), ethnicity and trust in religious leaders in rural Senegal. Their article is titled: "Education, Religious Trust, and Ethnicity: the Case of Senegal". They find that adult literacy education is negatively associated with religious trust, while with other social categories trust in religious leaders is more variable. Ethnicity is strongly associated with religious trust across all three educational categories.

Which schools are chosen is also the issue pursued by N. Naiz Asadullah and Maliki in their article on Indonesia. Titled: "Madrasah or Private School? The Determinants of School Type Choice in Rural and Urban Indonesia". They discover that girls from low income families are significantly more likely to attend madrasahs irrespective of their geographical location.

*Influence of Political Culture.* Six articles in volume 62 consider the question of political culture. Maia Chankeliani wonders about the influence of political culture on foreign students who attend higher education in different countries. She studies the differences between students from post-Soviet Eurasia who have studied in Russia and those who have studied in Europe or the United States. Her article is titled: "The Politics of Student Mobility: Links between Outbound Student Flows and the Democratic Development in post-Soviet Eurasia," She finds that students who have studied in Russia return to countries with significantly lower levels of democratic development.

Liana Beattie approaches the question of what influence Soviet Leadership has had on pedagogy. Her article is titled: "We're all mad here... Soviet Leadership and Its Impact on Education. Through the Looking Glass of Raymond William's Cultural Materialism." And, Nicole Duerrenberger and Susanne Warning ask about the association between attending publically-supported higher education, expected years of schooling, and a country's level of corruption. Their article covers the circumstances in 88 countries and is titled: "Corruption and Education in Developing Countries: The Role of Public vs. Private Funding of Higher Education". They find that corruption is negatively associated

with expected years of schooling. They also discover that in low corruption countries the portion of public higher education increases expected years of schooling but not in high corruption countries.

Concerning the political culture of the Middle East and North Africa, Caroline Krafft and Halimat Alawode explore the inequality of higher education opportunity. Their article is titled: "Inequality of Opportunity in Higher Education in the Middle East and North Africa". They discover that inequality of opportunity is high in both Tunisia and Egypt but moderate in Jordan. They conclude that where higher education is free of private cost as in Tunisia and Egypt, public spending on higher education is regressive and perpetuates inequality.

How do female Arab faculty fare in Israeli universities? In her article titled: "Female Arab Faculty Staff in Israeli Academy: Challenges and Coping Strategies," Khalid Arar suggests that breaking the glass ceiling for Arab females in Israeli universities is considerably more complicated than breaking the glass ceiling elsewhere because there are two 'ceilings', one in the academy and the other in their own culture.

Finally, there is the question of what influence education may have on political culture, specifically the degree to which education may affect the fragility of the nation. An article written by Pavel Tendetnik, Grant Clayton and Katy Cathcart is titled: "Education and Nation-State Fragility: Evidence from Panel Data Analysis". They find that education is capable of mitigating state fragility and can affect stable regimes under certain circumstances.

The Teaching Profession. Three articles concentrate on teachers, the teaching profession. Because teachers are professionals, should they not have more classroom autonomy? Should they not be, encouraged to choose the most appropriate pedagogy under their particular classroom circumstances? Governments, central education authorities have conflicted feelings about the nature of teacher autonomy. On the one hand they may feel that autonomy is to be encouraged in theory. On the other hand, they may be, tempted to inaugurate new methods of evaluation and assessment which may, in effect, limit a teacher's authority. What has been the tendency? Has teacher autonomy increased or decreased?

This question has been raised by Dong Wook Jeong and Thomas Luschei. Their article is titled: "Are Teachers Losing Control of the Classroom? Global Changes in School Governance and Teacher Responsibilities." Their study covered changes in governmental authority in 33 countries between 2000 and 2015. They discover that teachers have lost decision-making authority while central governments and school administrators have gained authority. They also discover that an increase in government authority has a negative impact on the level of responsibility of teachers, particularly in instruction and curriculum. In essence, the trend described in this article poses a threat to teacher professionalism globally. The importance of these findings sets this article off as being of particular importance to our field.

Two other articles address issues of the teaching profession. One of

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them may parallel the findings of Jeong and Luschei. Marika Matengu, Allie Cleghorn and Ritta-Liisa Korkeamaki raise the issue of local and national policy-makers in Namibia. Their article is titled: “Keeping the National Standard? Contextual Dilemmas of Educational Marginalization in the View of Namibian Policy Actors”. They discover that central policy makers favor national standards while local authorities favor more diversity in standards and control over those standards.

Lastly, there is an article on whether school teachers transmit stereotype views of ethnic groups other than their own. Do they help instill or ameliorate prejudice? Line Kuppens, Anim Langer and Sulley Ibrahim ask this question about teachers in Kenya. Their article is titled: “‘A Teacher is No Politician’: Stereotypic Attitudes of Secondary School Teachers in Kenya”. Their findings are encouraging. They discover that Kenyan teachers seem careful to not allow their own stereotypes to influence their teaching practices.

*Privatization and School Fees* Twenty years ago, many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa abolished school fees only to discover that the resources were not adequate to maintain minimum quality standards. Uganda was among them. Now certain school fees are charged informally in Ugandan public primary schools. What has been the result? In an article titled: “Informal Fee Charges and School Choice Under a Free Primary Education Policy: Panel Data Evidence from Rural Uganda,” Katsuki Sakaue finds a strong negative effect on school attendance of children from low-income families. They also find that private schools are not able to absorb these children who leave public schools because of their fees.

South Korea initiated a program of school choice in 2010. The municipal authorities in Seoul privatized a large percentage of the public schools by giving them greater autonomy over administration and curriculum. They also made their budgets dependent on student enrollment. But how did these newly privatized public schools change their expenditures, curriculum and personnel after they had been granted autonomy? In the article titled: “Privatization and School Practice: Evidence from Seoul’s High School Choice Policy,” this question is addressed by Youngran Kim who finds four significant changes. Schools which were privatized: (i) increased time spent on math and Korean language; (ii) reduced time spent on social studies; (iii) increased per/pupil expenditures and allocated them to academic activities; and (iv) hired younger and less experienced teachers.

Private tutoring has become the norm in many countries. But how has the popularity of private tutoring affecting public schooling? Has it added to public schooling’s effectiveness or has it detracted from the importance and contribution of public schooling? This question has been addressed in India by Shalini Bhorkar and Mark Bray in their article titled: “The Expansion and Roles of Private Tutoring in India: From Supplementation to Supplantation”. They discover that the role of

private tutoring expands from early primary to secondary education and that the relationship between private tutoring and mainstream schooling shifts. They argue that by the upper grades private tutoring had virtually supplanted mainline schooling.

Noteworthy Individual Articles Three individual articles in this volume stand out as being of particular importance.

*Innovation transfer.* Is it possible to transfer a successful innovation from one country context to another? There is an abundance of experience suggesting that the differences in culture and context are overwhelming. However, in an article about Escuela Nueva titled: “The Reproduction of ‘Best Practice’: Following Escuela Nueva to the Philippines and Vietnam”, Hang Le follows the introduction of this important pedagogical innovation which had its origins in Columbia. The findings suggest that the model was reframed at different stages of implementation, but in both country cases the innovation did, in fact, work successfully. The conclusion: Escuela Nueva may have the potential of being an educational innovation with near universal applicability.

*Gender violence* is a significant problem among students. But why do male students act out against female students in the same school? This question was raised by Catherine Vanner in her article titled: “‘This is a Competition’: The Relationship Between Examination Pressure and Gender Violence in Primary Schools in Kirinyaga, Kenya”. Females often outperform males on tests of academic achievement. Those tests have stakes so high that they determine a student’s life future. Kenyan students are often subjected to physical punishment and abuse in the classroom. By watching occurrences in two schools, Catherine Vanner discovers that males were subjected to corporal punishment and humiliation and that their embarrassment leads to resentment. She concludes that exam preparation would be more successful without corporal punishment and humiliation and that the level of gender violence might well decrease.

Finally, there is the issue of *skills gap*. It is commonly found that there is a gap in skills between graduates of higher educational institutions and employers. Is this because there is a failure of educational institutions? If so, why is this problem so difficult to address? This question was raised by Tran Le Huu Nghia in an article titled: “Game of Blames: Higher Education Stakeholders’ Perceptions of Causes of Vietnamese Graduates’ Skills Gap”. After interviewing students, graduates, academics and employers, it is discovered that stakeholder groups all blamed each other and held groups other than their own responsible. What does this suggest? Perhaps it implies that when reality is different from one’s expectations, the fault is one’s own and not all other categories of stakeholders.

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