International Journal of Educational Development 102 (2023) 102882

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

International Journal of Educational Development

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/ijedudev

# IJED volume 102 summary of articles

With 30 contributions, volume 102 is especially rich. Seven manuscripts are part of special issues, four in the special issue on vocational and technical education, two for the special issue on faith-based education, and one for the special issue on recommencing learning following the COVID shutdowns. These will be discussed and summarized separately by the special issue editors. The discussion here will pertain to the others.

Seven manuscripts in volume 102 pertain to teachers or teaching. In the first, the question is raised as to whether community participation affects teacher accountability. In this instance, 'participation' is defined by the establishment of a mechanism for community leaders to monitor the attendance and performance of teachers in Indonesian community schools. The paper is titled: "Can Community Participation Leverage Changes in Teacher Behavior? Evidence from Remote Areas of Indonesia". Christopher Bjork and Dewi Susanti discovered that the initiative empowered communities and improved both teacher attendance and teacher performance.

A second deals with a schoolteacher concern dating back to the beginning of all formal education, that of corporal punishment. Should teachers physically punish students for bad behavior or slow academic performance? In their article titled: "Towards Ending Corporal Punishment in African Countries: Experience from Tanzania," John Fungulupembe Kalolo and Orestes Silverius Kapinga attribute the continuation of corporal punishment to three factors: (i) hegemony of cultural and traditional practices, (ii) the porosity of laws and guidelines, and (iii) the general African context. They note that the 'stakeholders' (including families) had differing views on the use of corporal punishment with some supporting its continuation.

It is widely acknowledged that children have access to teachers of different quality, with rural and underprivileged children having teachers who, by comparison, are less qualified. But there has been a large growth of education attainment in the last 15 years. Does that not open opportunities for an equalization of access to teachers with more equal levels of training? This is the question raised by Lara Simielli in her article titled: "We Know Students' Access to Qualified Teachers is Unequal, But How Much? Measuring the Gap in Brazil over 15 Years." She finds that access to teachers with BA qualifications in rural and in impoverished areas has dramatically improved over the last 15 years. But access to teachers with MA qualifications has also improved, and the MA teachers tend to end up in more wealthy schools with more privileged children making the 'gap' in access to teacher quality virtually unchanged.

What about new teachers being hired in Sub-Saharan Africa over the last 15 years? Opportunities for school leavers are more diverse. Are the newly hired teachers as good as the older ones? This is the question posed in the article titled: "Long-Lived Consequences of Rapid Scale-Up? The Case of Free Primary Education in Six Sub-Saharan African Countries". Don Filmer discovers that grade four teachers hired after Free Primary Education Policies went into effect perform worse on language and math tests than teachers hired before the reform. And recently hired teachers also performed worse on tests of subject content knowledge. The author is quick to point out that the performance difference between old and new teachers is not uniform across countries and ranges from negligible to significant, but on average teacher quality had declined after the policy of free primary education was introduced.

Can teachers in a low-income, highly unstable political environment deliver lessons on environmental education? This is the question raised by Mulugeta Gugssa in the article titled: "Characterizing Environmental Education Practices in Ethiopian Primary Schools." Teachers, he notes, believe that environment lessons ought to be delivered in a hands-on location (outside of school?) where students can practice local environment experiments and projects. However, teachers reported that the circumstances required the lessons to be classroom-based and teacher-centered. Large class sizes, lack of training, and issues of student safety tended to dominate the choice of pedagogy.

Can principals with good leadership skills affect student achievement? This is the question posed in the paper titled: "Relationship Between Principal Leadership and Student Achievement: A Comparison Study Between Germany and China," by Dan Chen and Wilfried Bos. The authors discovered that principals had no significant effect on student achievement in either China or Germany. However, they found that certain 'sub-dimensions' of principal leadership had effects in both countries bring the authors to the conclusion that principals may have similar 'conceptual constructs but quite different ways to cultivate achievement'.

Teachers are supposed to adapt the pedagogy to foster social and emotional learning. Is there a way to measure how they do this? In the article titled: " 'Teach What's Good for Learners': Adaptive Teacher Pedagogy for Social and Emotional Learning in Malawi," Joengmin Lee describes several discrete methods. These include the use of social-emotional vocabulary, making classroom rules for supporting social-emotional learning, coaching specific behavior, and by using poetry. Teacher's use of these methods is influenced by their beliefs concerning the roles and responsibilities, cultural norms, and various classroom constraints.

With respect to university teachers: does living through a societal transition affect their willingness and/or ability to adapt? This is an issue of considerable concern in the countries of the former Soviet Union, and is the central question raised in the paper titled: "Transformation of the Role of University Teachers in Newly Independent

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2023.102882

Available online 4 September 2023

States: Case Study of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University." Today, 70% of the students study in the Kazakh language instead of Russian and the traditional university norms are challenged by 'consumerism and marketing' with respect to the interaction between university administration, faculty, and students. The authors Gulsharat Minazheva, Aigerim Mynbayeva, Kamchat Yessenova, and Aigul Alchimbayeva pont out the tensions raised with the changing role of the 'Soviet teacher' in the current environment, between the traditional values and norms and the new marketing approaches.

Five papers in Volume 102 deal with issues of inequality. One is titled: "Collaboration and Socio-Economic Inequality: Estimating the Effects of Intra-School and Inter-School Inequality on Learning Collaborative Problem-Solving Skills." In this paper Paul Sum and Gabriel Badescu analyze the impact of socio-economic family inequality on the ability to learn collaborative problem-solving skills. Their results across 46 countries are interesting. Analyzed across individual differences, messo (regional) differences and national differences, the first and second have significant negative effects. However, effects of national differences in inequality are different. They find that national differences in social policies toward inequality can counteract the other more negative effects in inequality at the individual and local levels and can 'reaffirm the importance of education to democratic citizenship and institutions'.

There has been much discussion in this journal, as others, about the effects of a Brazilian program to assist the poor called 'Bolsa Familia'. One reason the attention is justified is that it represents a 'moral contract' between the taxpayer and the welfare beneficiary. Bolsa Familia asks that welfare recipient families be responsible for making improvements in the public good. Cash benefits are maintained if the children attend school on a regular basis. The Bolsa Familia is credited with an upsurge in school enrollment among the poor. The question is whether Bolsa Familia has ancillary effects such as a rise in academic achievement. This question is raised in the manuscript titled: " How is the Bolsa Familia Program Associated with Test Score Performance of Economically Disadvantaged Pupils in Brazil". Authors Lausanne Vaud and Luana Marx discover significant but modest associations between participation in the Bolsa Familia program and language and mathematics achievement, but they also discover that the effect is larger with pupils in wealthier parts of the country, suggesting that the effects of the Bolsa Familia program, though substantial may not be sufficient to offset other socio-economic disadvantages.

The results of the third manuscript on inequality are not as positive. China has invested a great deal in the education and training of non-Han groups over the last two decades. Has this investment altered the disparity in income or in educational attainment of non-Han Chinese? This is the question raised in the paper titled: "Educational and Income Disparities Among Ethnic Minorities in China." Authors Thomas Chia and Daniel Hruschka analyze the results from surveys of 27,000 respondents between 1989 and 2015. They find that substantial disparities remain in both income and educational attainment. They conclude that 'despite years of explicit government efforts to create equality among ethnic groups, such disparities persist and have in some cases grown'.

In a fourth paper on inequality, the topic concerns how and who from China studies abroad. In the paper titled: "Brighter or Richer? Understanding Chinese College Students' Choices to Study Abroad," Shiuyn Liu, Wenyan Liang and Ying Zhang conclude that both individual characteristics and family background help determine the hope to study abroad, but that academic ability plays a more important role in the final success than family background. Sound familiar?

Lastly, associated with other papers on inequality are the children of refugees. Today there are 100 million refugees in the world, divided between those who are living in another country and those who are refugees living in their own country. The most numerous source of refugees is Syria with 15 million of which seven live within parts of their own country. What happens to the schooling of the children of these refugees? This is a topic of growing concern and the focus of the manuscript titled: "Syrian Refugee Students' Sense of School Belonging and Educational Aspirations." Ahmet Aypay and Nigar Mammadova discover that the 'sense of belonging' to the school, for understandable reasons, was only 'at a medium level' and differed by gender, duration of being a refugee, and the specific schools in which they were enrolled.

Infrastructure is also a common theme among articles in volume 102. Does an increase in preschool opportunity affect later schooling? This is the issue raised in the paper titled: "Impacts of Village Preschools on Student Enrollment and Longer-Term Outcomes: New Evidence from the Poorest Regions in China." Authors Shuangye Chen, Yanlin Liu, Jin Yang, and Xiaoyang Ye find that after an enrollment increase of 60% between 2010 and 2018 new preschools substantially increased access to early childhood education and had positive impacts on cognitive skills four years after enrollment. The positive impact, however, did not seem to translate to non-cognitive skills.

A similar question was raised in India. Does the expansion of primary school opportunity have later effects? In the paper titled: "The Impact of Primary Schooling Expansion on Adult Educational Attainment, Literacy, and Health: Evidence from India's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan", Arindam Nandi, Nicole Haberland and Thoai F. Ngo find that grade attainment improved, literacy improved, and weight/height scores improves. Good.

Two manuscripts focused on the issue of higher education organizations. How common is it now for higher education institutions to sponsor programs of university social responsibility (USR)? In the article titled: "Regional Characteristics and Temporal Changes of Research Trends in University Social Responsibility Studies: An Exploratory Study Using Text Mining," authors Takako Sasaki and Ching-Yi Horng find that the type of USR differed by the social situation but that the general use of USR has 'converged to meet demands of university social contribution'.

In the second manuscript the question is raised as to how universities in the post-Soviet space can adjust to the pressures of geopolitics. The article is titled: "Geopolitical Agendas and Internationalization of Post-Soviet Higher Education: Discursive Dilemmas in the Realm of the Prestige Economy." The article constitutes a 'cri de coeur' (cry of the heart). Anatoly Oleksiyenko points out that elite global journals (such as IJED?) deal with discursive dilemmas while addressing geopolitical agendas in the internationalization of post-Soviet higher education. The paper seeks to understand how agencies from prestige economies have shaped the explanations of problems of the Soviet legacy. The author reflects the concerns of social scientists from the post-Soviet republics who remain on the periphery of the global prestige economy as well as the geopolitical agendas championed by the Russian government. This important topic will be the subject of continuing reflection in the future.

In their article on the effects of privatization titled: "The Collateral Effects of Private School Expansion in a Deregulated Market: Peru, 1996–2019," Jose Maria Renteria discovers that private school subsidies do not necessarily increase access to formal education or improve wages of graduates. How badly does war affect schooling? In the article titled: "The Effect of War on Educational Institutions in Eastern Tigray Ethiopia," Fikre Belay Tekulu et. al. find that the distance to the nearest school doubled or tripled, and half the students are unable to attend. The destruction of schools has resulted in the total collapse of the education system in Eastern Tigray.

On the question of appropriate large scale multinational assessments of academic achievement, Diego Carrasco, David Rutkowski and Leslie Rutkowski point out that regional assessments are more accurate and more helpful than global assessments. Their paper is titled: "The Advantages of Regional Large-Scale Assessments: Evidence from UNESCO's Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (ERCE) Learning Survey." Lastly is the issue of what educators have learned about technology from the COVED experience. In the article titled: "Toward a Holistic Approach to Ed Tech Effectiveness: Lessons from COVID-19 Research in Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya, Pakistan and Sierra Leone," Susan Nicolai, Katy Jordan, Tom Kaye and Christina Myers discuss learning outcomes, equity, implementation, cost, affordability, alignment and scale.

*Final Lessons*

Two impressions emerge from the wealth of discussion in volume 102. The article measuring the quality of teachers before and after the announcement of free primary education in Sub Saharan Africa leads us to wonder what went wrong. Why would teachers following the policy change have lower cognitive skills and subject matter knowledge than those who were in classroom before them? It is easy to point fingers and hypothesize causes. But it is also necessary. It is unacceptable to expand education 'free of charge' without the wherewithal and the planning to raise the level of classroom resources proportionally, and not just proportionally to past standards but proportionally to the standards of children learning the same material at the nation's trading partners. The decline in the teacher's grasp of the curriculum and the skills needed to teach is a sign not just of bad planning but of something worse. It is a sign of an unacceptable level managerial incompetence.

The article noting how difficult it is for university teachers in the Europe and Central Asia Region to manage the dilemmas of suddenly feeling on the periphery of prestige economies and at the same time, having to struggle with the geopolitical agendas championed by autocratic leaders, this is a prescient sign of a major higher education problem. While the IJED remains linked to the facts behind all education issues, at the same time, we must acknowledge the dilemmas of our fellow professionals and provide space for them to analyze their circumstances. While it is true that global institutions have helped to shape explanations of the legacy, it is also true that they can offer an understanding of common principles and purposes which may prove helpful to everyone.

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