

## **Editorial 27(1): An early start to Volume 27, and our expanded editorial team**

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Welcome to IIER's first issue for 2017! With publication date 15 January, IIER 27(1) marks our earliest ever start to a new year. Previously our earliest starts were for 20(1) on 15 February 2010 and 22(1) on 27 February 2012. The early start to 2017 reflects the expansion in 2016, when IIER received 195 submissions, compared with 124 in 2015. In 2016 IIER published 40 articles, compared with 31 in 2015. For 2017 we do not have a precise target, though depending on review process outcomes and the recent expansion of our editorial team it may turn out to be larger than 40. After some brief impressions about the 11 articles in 27(1), this Editorial introduces our expanded editorial team.

The first article for 27(1) by Reem Aldegether investigates the personal epistemologies of female Saudi Arabian student teachers, using the "women's ways of knowing" perspective. The cultural context is unique, as the Saudi educational system provides a single-sex schooling model in K-12 and higher education. She concludes that the use of connected versus separate ways of knowing may conform to the ideals of one's society rather than one's personal preference or learning style.

Mirella Atherton follows up on an earlier article in IIER 25(2) with a further investigation of confidence levels of students, comparing those enrolled in open access programs with students in undergraduate courses at the University of Newcastle, NSW. She finds that students in the first year of undergraduate chemistry had significantly lower confidence than students in open access courses, notwithstanding the usual expectation that open access students are disadvantaged in some way.

In their meta-analysis of research into homework and academic achievement Gökhan Baş, Cihad Çentürk and Fatih Mehmet Çiğerci reviewed 11 studies drawn from contrasting country contexts, 5 from the USA and 6 from Turkey and one other Middle Eastern country. In finding a small positive effect size, they also report upon the influences of methodological characteristics (research design, sample size, and publication bias) and substantive characteristics (course type, grade level, duration of implementation, instructional level, socioeconomic status, and setting).

Feedback received by teacher education students during professional experience or practicum in some NSW schools is examined by Neville Ellis and Tony Loughland, from the perspectives of feed up ('Where am I going?'), feed back ('How am I going?') and feed forward ('Where to next?'). They advocate more explicit and constructive feedback with increased attention to 'Where am I going?' and 'Where to next?' comments.

Karen Goodnough and Elizabeth Murphy report upon the professional learning undertaken by two Canadian primary school teachers, in the context of endeavours to improve outcomes for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) learning. Considering the principle of expansive learning, they find that expansion of the teachers' community catalysed their adoption of new tools, including action research tools, pedagogical tools and information and technology tools.

Of the many diverse contexts for work-integrated learning ('WIL'), the context for the research reported by Rachael Hains-Wesson, Vikki Pollard and Angela Campbell is one of the more unusual. Following up on earlier research reported in *IHER* 24(3), they present a study featuring students in a creative and performing arts program engaged in a street performing arts activity. They draw upon action research and develop insights into the important role that improvisation has in teamwork skills.

Steven Males, Frank Bate and Jean Macnish present a substantial investigation that links two major topics in the Australian schools context, high-stakes testing through the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), and mobile learning as developed by school computing initiatives in '1:1 laptop' or 'BYOD' programs. Addressing concerns that over-reliance on mobile devices for learning may be detrimental to student accomplishments in literacy and numeracy, they present detailed findings that in a Western Australian school the implementation of mobile learning had little effect on student performance as shown by NAPLAN testing.

"Exploring primary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs for teaching dance education" by Suzanne Renner and Keryn Pratt develops interesting insights into a circumstance that no doubt occurs all too often in primary and secondary schools in many contexts. This is, teachers being required to teach an unfamiliar subject in which they may feel under pressure due to their lack of skills and knowledge in the subject. In the New Zealand primary school context, Suzanne and Keryn found that 'generalist' teachers typically reported high levels of self-efficacy beliefs for teaching dance.

Whilst "teaching teamwork" is in itself an important topic in higher education, the main feature of the article by Linda Riebe, Antonia Girardi and Craig Whitsed is perhaps the presentation of a fine example of a systematic literature review process. Though their article is tightly focused upon teaching teamwork skills in business disciplines in the Australian university context, in it they illustrate a literature review technique that is relevant for a wide range of disciplines.

Grant Rodwell's article on the politics of Tasmanian school retention rates is aptly summarised by the phrase 'A bridge too far?' It illustrates from the historian's perspective how our political processes may set very difficult or even "too far" goals for teachers and the educational system they serve, and how we may analyse the "who" and "how" of these processes.

The last article in this issue, by Marlizah Yusuf, Peter Taylor and Muhd Ibrahim Muhamad Damanhuri, explores the concepts of 'hegemony' and 'critical pedagogy'. Marlizah presents her account of a personal journey leading to a vision for transforming

secondary level chemistry education. Her article joins the very small number of IIER articles by Indonesian researchers, there being only two other representations of Indonesia in recent years, in 26(1) and 22(2).

To conclude this editorial, we record our great appreciation of the work done in 2016 by IIER's external reviewers. Their names and affiliations are recorded in the Reviewers 2016 page [1]. We are also very pleased to welcome two new Associate Editors, Dr Jenni Parker and Dr Coral Pepper, who are already increasing our capacity to deal with the rising number of submissions in a scholarly, formative and timely manner.

### **Welcoming Jenni Parker to the IIER editorial team**

Firstly, I would like to thank the IIER editorial team for inviting me to join the team as an Associate Editor. During my doctorate studies I wrote many research papers in conjunction with my supervisors and work colleagues [2]. From a researcher and author perspective I learnt a great deal from the feedback I received from the reviewers and I strongly encourage new doctorate students to start writing and submitting abstracts and articles to conferences such as WAIER [3] and journals early in their studies. During my studies I learnt a lot about good academic writing. However, as a new Associate Editor with IIER I have learnt so much more. It has been a steep learning curve, but one that I am enjoying immensely. It is a rewarding experience to be able to assist other authors to achieve a successful submission to a journal that encompasses a wide range of educational research topics, methods and contexts, as is the case with IIER.

### **Welcoming Coral Pepper to the IIER editorial team**

Thank you for inviting me to join the IIER Editorial team as an Associate Editor. Over the past decade I achieved numerous publications describing my research and I am now embracing the opportunity to contribute to the publication process from this different perspective. As an early career academic I was supported well by IIER reviewers with constructive, considered and concise feedback designed to strengthen and value add to my academic writing, for publication in this multi-faceted journal [4]. As a new Associate Editor I am experiencing another steep learning curve as I work to assist others achieve their own publication successes.

### **References**

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