# Introduction

# Gillian L. S. Hilton & Elizabeth Achinewhu-Nworgu

# Recovering Education: Using the Experiences and Learning Acquired to Build New and Better Education Systems

# Abstract

This paper addresses the challenges faced by global education systems, recovering and moving forward after the pandemic. Above all, in striving to achieve the equity of provision and inclusion of all students, which has been a UN global ambition not as yet achieved, despite UN Sustainable Development Goal 4. The paper addresses four specific areas of concern: financing education globally; adopting an inclusive philosophy for all learners at whatever level and age; examining the staffing issues affecting school and higher/tertiary education; and the need to consolidate hybrid methods of teaching and learning. The aim of institutions such as UNESCO is to bring the world together to move forward in educational provision at all levels, but at present the challenges faced globally are massive, due not only to the pandemic, but also to the previous lack of progress, in many educational areas. The paper raises many questions about the needs and some possible solutions in those four areas.

Keywords: equality, inclusion, finance of education, schools, universities, hybrid learning, staffing, training and development, teachers

# Introduction

Recovering education is the theme for the 2023 BCES Conference, as the world is attempting to address the problems of the last few years, during which delivering education has been seriously affected. After the massive effects of the pandemic on learning at all ages and stages of education, systems worldwide are being challenged, by the urgent requirements for change in many areas and pressure to recover lost aims and abandoned actions. Some as a result of the pandemic, others, long standing concerns (such as equality of access, funding, shortage of teaching staff), all to date unresolved. The Setting Commitments' Report from UNESCO (2022a) raised the question of where education is at present and the need to set clear commitments to achieve the UN SD Goal 4 on educational equality. A separate report called for the need to transform education, including stronger commitment to lifelong learning for all and the establishment of a social contract, bringing nations together to 'provide the

knowledge and innovation needed to shape a better world, anchored in social, economic, and environmental justice' (UNESCO, 2022b, no page). It summarised the needed actions to improve global education systems, presenting five specific areas namely: schools that are inclusive, equable, safe and healthy, providing learning and skills needed for life, work and sustainable development; better planning and execution in the provision of teachers, including the problems of under recruitment; better training and increased support for the profession, to increase social status; the pedagogical challenges of new ways of learning and teaching; the implications presented by the use of digital and hybrid learning; plus, possibly the most urgent, how education for the future is to be financed. These though, are merely a small selection of the pandemic and the failure to move forward on achieving the UN SD Goal 4, 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all' (UN, 2022, p. 11) by the set date of 2030.

The resulting concerns for all those involved in education, whether politicians, educationalists or learners are immense, if the world is to recover and move forward by embracing new ways of organising and supporting learning. These needs require governmental and social attitude changes world-wide, in order to cope with the challenges faced presently in education and those which may arise in the future. Schleicher (2022) pointed out some of these problems: inequality in provision; unequal rewards for working in that sphere; and the possible automation of jobs many young people are aspiring to attain; labour markets undergoing massive reorganisation, requiring additional digital skills. Education must take account of these future needs and the constant changes facing the employment sector.

However, these are just some of the areas requiring consideration. The opinions of those who receive and use education, the learners and for children, their parents/carers, need involvement. In addition, we must contemplate how education systems in various countries are organised and run, with such varied structures in place across the world, for example, selective or non-selective schools, independent schools; those run from a particular religious viewpoint, or the so called 'free' or parent-led schools and home schooling. In addition, there are a variety of tertiary opportunities available including old and new universities, apprenticeships and colleges of all kinds, offering a variety of education/training opportunities. However, access to education is often limited, due to costs, poor provision, bias against particular groups, or inadequate initial education at school. Those who organise and support the education systems and also the financiers must be involved. All of these bodies have a part to play and deserve consultation. Employers who eventually hire students after education need discussion on their requirements, before any decisions are made. In tertiary education, those in charge of colleges specialising in applied skills and all universities need to be included in negotiations about their provision.

Quality controllers of various types including exam boards, responsible for setting test papers, the groups who assess the quality of the learning offered at the different levels, either local or national, must be consulted. Many countries' government departments running education, have at their head a Minister and employ civil servants, who have little knowledge of, or experience of delivering education in any formal way, but have merely attended schools and possibly graduated from university. This does not help in decision making, where intensely practical needs have to be addressed on how the administration of education should occur, in so many diverse conditions. Planners/designers of educational buildings and the organisers of provision in particular areas to suit the population and cope with day to day fluctuations in need, must be involved. Finally, the world outlook summarised by UN suggestions for education, must be taken into account, particularly its ambition for sustainable development globally. All of these, in a world where many children, have no chance of attending even primary school on a regular basis, particularly if they are female (Hilton, 2022a). The quality of education offered globally is, from all figures supplied, extremely variable between nations, such as differences in the numbers of school/university places available and whether education is free or fee paying. Physical environments and equipment supplied differ widely, depending on local and national conditions. This was noted during the pandemic, where some children had no formal schooling for over two years, whilst others were offered online lessons, particularly those in developed countries. However, students at any level of education are still affected in how possible it is to continue their education, by their family's financial status and the costs of equipment and provision of internet connections. If globally we ignore these problems, our prospects to achieve the UN goals are poor and the whole world will suffer.

This paper cannot cover this multitude of concerns, which need to be addressed globally in order to recover education systems worldwide, so attempts to examine the following issues which lie at the heart of the problems faced, namely: funding of education at all levels; the challenges of providing inclusive education; solving ongoing and serious staffing issues, such as recruitment, working conditions and remuneration; and the training and development of those in the forefront of delivering education to others, to help them adjust to widening approaches to teaching and learning, including hybrid methods of delivery.

# **Funding education**

The first question to be raised here is when should formal education begin, with funding provided and when should it end? Should it be from cradle to the grave; what part should the state provide financially; should so called private education in schools and colleges be allowed to exist; what is the role of commercial enterprises/charities, religious organisations; what should those who enjoy education be expected to contribute financially, whether for nursery care, school attendance, degrees or technical level studies and lifelong learning? So, to support equality of access should be one system for financing education, that is, from the state, or should others, be permitted? Are these sources a help or a hindrance, favouring the rich or the knowing, or those prepared to sacrifice themselves to a particular creed or belief pattern? Is it possible to have a world view on what is required and ignore cultural differences and the widely varying needs of citizens? Is globalisation the answer or itself the problem? Whatever the conclusion, there is no equality of access to many types of educational provision. Governments globally have to make the choice between state, or multiple sources of funding and removal of choice could be very difficult to enforce in some countries. Certainly, it appears that privately funding education for one's own children is viewed in many nations as a sign of ambition and success and this phenomenon is highly popular in countries such as China, despite appearing to be rather against communist philosophical beliefs.

Carney (2022) examined how technology is taking over education creating sociological and philosophical changes, moving towards instrumentalism and

sentimentality as opposed to critical and aesthetic enquiry. Education is often seen as the solution to problems, for example, educate a woman and you educate a family and the GDP of the nation rises (Elks, 2020). Now however, it is often viewed as the cause of conflict and division, creating as many problems as it solves. Education is not a solution if it is not funded correctly and results, at the end of study, fail to lead to relevant employment, or a successful life. This scenario was apparent as a cause of the Somalian civil war (Carney, 2022).

Funding of education is a major concern for all nations, especially those whose national income levels are low and we have to question if the northern hemisphere/western perceptions of what is good education, is the only way to success. Some states may not have the requisite money to fund education at all levels and it is clear that if parents have to pay for schooling, then boys in less developed countries get precedence (Global Partnership for Education, 2021).

In addition, there is no universal agreement on what type of education should be offered, for example, one where rote learning and a lack of questioning of provided facts or statistics is built into a system, or one where questioning, creativity, self-reflection and individual reactions and responses are encouraged. Certainly we are provided globally with detailed data on how much finance countries apportion to education and what level of learning receives the most. Figures show that spending on higher education generally tops the list (OECD, 2021) whereas for many, the need to front-prime education for the youngest children is seen as the best the way to proceed (World Bank, 2022).

In 2015 the 2030 Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2015) had set goals for governments to allocate at least 4% to 6% of GDP to education, and/or allocate at least 15% to 20% of public expenditure to education and in 2021 UNESCO member states agreed to further increase funding to education to overcome the effects of the pandemic (UNESCO, 2021).

We now have a system in many developed countries where in order to succeed, large amounts of money have to be spent to enable an individual to obtain the 'correct' qualifications. Previously these were acquired gradually during employment, possibly a more achievable approach for all. UNESCO and other sources, produce quantitative figures to compare national spending patterns, but in most cases countries' systems of education are so different, the figures have little depth of meaning, or are of little use comparatively. It is essential to be able to examine whether money spent educating people is of value to the individual, or the nation, but this requires more than statistics in order to judge the results.

The discrepancy between developed and developing countries in the amount of GDP allotted to education widened as a result of the Covid pandemic (AI-Samarrai et al., 2021). The joint report 'Education Finance Watch 2021' by World Bank, GEM and UNESCO, showed that pre-pandemic education spending had increased during the last decade globally, but was then badly affected by the needs created by the increasing demands of the health sector, created by the pandemic. As a result, governments in 65% of poorer nations reduced education funding, whilst reduction in education budgets was only seen in 33% of richer nations. The report also claims that the recent gains seem unlikely to continue in the near future.

More importantly than the amount of finance provided for education, is the efficacy of the use of that finance. This appears to be failing, as large amounts of money are spent, with limited results. World Bank (2019) showed that despite spending

rising in low and middle income countries, 53% of their ten year olds cannot read and understand an age appropriate text. The problem appears to be ineffective and unequal use of finance and a lack of clear linking of spending to the final outcomes of education. Rises in education spending have not resulted it appears, in better outcomes for students. Financial control and the close scrutiny of spending need to be managed more strictly and results assessed regularly, if progress is to be made and wastage of resources avoided.

It is not therefore only poorer countries who are struggling to provide the necessary funds for education, as in developed countries the costs of student debt, incurred from university fees is increasing and research budgets are stretched. In the UK, nurseries, the start of educational provision are closing due to increased running costs and a shortage of trained staff, leaving families with working parents unable to find child care for the under-fives (Leitch, 2022). Plus schools are struggling to introduce a new induction programme for teachers the costs of which are heavy (Hilton, 2022b). Whatever the financial demands in individual countries, it appears governments of all nations are failing to provide good access to high standard education, due to rising costs and higher expectations.

Possibly the most urgent attention needed to recovering education, is to examine how and on what money is spent/wasted in the individual countries, in order to assure careful use of the limited, but so essential resources the world can offer to this needy area. Improvement in the application, efficacious use and control of available finance, could result in a much faster improvement in world education systems.

#### Inclusion

The UNESCO GEM Report (UNESCO, 2020) addressed the global problems of lack of inclusion in education, namely those excluded by background or ability. The report is influenced by the Incheon Declaration Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2015) which committed the education community to the UN SD Goal 4 and the imperative of educational inclusion in all global systems. It suggests why inclusion is yet to be achieved globally and the reasons for this failure. The Equity Report (UNESCO, no date) demonstrated an improvement in gender equity in education and in developed countries, girls outperforming boys in school and university. Gaps between the provision and quality of rural and urban education still exist in various countries, but some improvement had been demonstrated.

However, in certain areas, for example in sub-Saharan Africa, the gap between boys and girls increases as they grow older, with poverty having a large effect on the figures for girls' education, in comparison to those for boys. In addition, resulting from effects of the pandemic, serious alterations in school attendance occurred, whilst tertiary education was mostly conducted online, limiting the attendance of those without access to requisite equipment.

In order to offer equality of education to all, there are numerous issues to consider. The inclusion of students with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) and those from diverse backgrounds such as immigrants and different cultural groups, who are in mainstream education, is an increasing challenge. Students with SEND may experience prejudice, bias, discrimination, or bullying (Ableism) which can be hostile or benevolently patronising (McCarthy, 2022). In addition, there is anxiety that globally, girls do not receive equal access to education, either through poverty (boys prioritised), or political/religious taboos (Afghanistan), or early marriage. In order to

change provision, improved school policies and teacher training, plus better parental involvement are essential (Singal, 2008).

SEND issues raise the question, is separate schooling the answer, or should there be special provision, depending on the severity of the learning issue, or physical disability? Much has been achieved in developed countries to offer equality of access to education for children with disabilities, but in developing countries the picture is not so positive. Srivastava et al. (2015) discuss the move towards Education for All, proposed by the World Education Forum in 2000 with the intention of being achieved by 2015. This had not occurred and in many countries students with SEND did not attend school, or were still taught in segregated, not mainstream establishments. They also point to the problems that may arise if Western moves on inclusivity, for example, removing special schools and enrolling al students in the same school with specialist provision, are attempted in developing countries. It is challenging to take this approach and implement it globally.

However, proposing and enacting inclusion of all SEND students in mainstream provision in some developed countries, has not been as successful as was hoped. This could be due to teachers' inability to cope with such a diverse student body, despite the careful planning of individual needs and goals; insufficient inclusion training of prospective teachers; or the reality that each SEND student has widely differing abilities and needs. Mulholland (2022) suggests that a new approach devised for Multi-Academy Trusts (MATS) in England and Wales should include provision of some smaller, more individual settings for SEND students. These would meet individual needs and be able to supply specific resources, allowing a more targeted individual approach. However, this author questions whether this could destroy the inclusion, recently achieved in these countries. She does however, also refer to the competitive nature of education, with schools being judged on results and points to the practices of off-rolling 'difficult' pupils to home education. The very poor regulation of pupil movement in the education system and the so called home schooling undertaken by parents she believes, are cause for concern. In addition, companies have exploited this laxity, particularly with pupils excluded from education by behavioural issues, with unscrupulous owners claiming they are home educating and charging parents for lessons provided in poor accommodation, often by untrained teachers (Channel 4 TV, 2019).

Inclusion in all education systems encompasses the need to create a process that transforms education in each sphere, to meet the needs of all students, and staff, particularly those from marginalised groups such as SEND, ethnic minorities and women, particularly in the developing world and those from lower income groups. This change may involve the examination of selection requirements, what curricula are offered, accessibility issues, support offered, equal treatment of staff and promotion criteria. Salmi and D'Addio (2020) stress that in higher education it also needs to challenge the reproduction of the inequality embedded in previous systems. Salmi (2020) also points to the equity data on admission to education, which tends to focus on disparities of access, as opposed to considering participation, related to population numbers of specific groups. Higher education needs to ensure its support for those with physical or learning challenges, in order to help them succeed and progress.

Certainly, university attendance and employment in many Western countries is not equable between racial groups and women, who outnumber men on university courses, are not taught by academic women at high levels in universities, men still hold most of the top posts, with black women earning the lowest academic salaries (Hilton, 2019). So at all levels internationally, inclusion of marginalised groups and equal treatment are not yet achieved and some serious internal questioning needs to occur, to change concepts and assumptions. If the world is to move forward in providing equal access to education and rights in employment, related to ability and expertise, students, plus all staff that educate them, must be treated equably.

Migration has been an ongoing crisis, as many flee war, natural disasters or to find a more successful life. This has created problems for countries seen as successful or peaceful, where opportunities exist. These newcomers have to be supported and also in many cases educated (often young men with few qualifications) or children. The intention of an online forum, organised by Arigatou International Geneva (2021, p. 2) as part of the 47<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council was to 'explore lessons learned and success stories, concrete examples from experts, policymakers and people from different religions, national and ethnic backgrounds' on how education of migrants, could best be supported. Conclusions were that education needed to go beyond literacy and numeracy and include instruction on social and emotional matters, spiritual and ethical learning.

In addition, it needs to stress gender equality, which is not ensured in many countries. Protection of mentally vulnerable learners too was paramount, as many of these students have traumatic previous and the private sector should be approached for increased support for inclusive education for these vulnerable groups, with new resources, new ways of learning and requisite financial support. The report concludes that, including these elements at all levels of education will aid social cohesion between host and migrant communities. To achieve this, a whole government approach is required across health, social affairs and education. The support of UN initiatives, for example in Uganda, has had marked effects and individual countries such as Greece have introduced language and reading classes in migrant centres to speed integration. However, in the UK it had been common to put non English speakers, traumatised and socially unprepared children, into main stream schooling, putting enormous pressures on teachers.

To ensure success for migrant and host communities, these actions to integrate migrants into their new countries needs concerted efforts from all possible sources of support, from international and national agencies, state and private, to individuals. Without these efforts migrants may not proceed to higher education and successful careers. Universities in England are assessed on their approach to and support of migrant students, particularly so in teacher training. A mixed ethnic workforce is therefore required in all levels of education, to provide inspirational support to students from whatever background.

# Solving ongoing and serious staffing issues

Staffing is a key to the success of any educational institution. Academic staff are the foundation of any education establishment and with the increased number of students recruited for studies in universities, and increasing numbers in schools, recruiting more teachers becomes a key to their success. Finding suitably qualified staff has become a big issue, not only in the UK, but around the world. The problem is evidenced in primary and secondary schools, further education and higher education. This obviously impacts teaching and learning, with constant shortages of teachers creating problems of consistency for students. Some tertiary establishments are now recruiting by word of mouth, from friends and families, without the rigours of effective recruitment and selection practices geared to equal opportunities in employment. Effective management of Human Resources is essential in all educational establishments to ensure excellent talent management, recruitment and selection practices.

A report by University and College Union (UCU, 2022) affirms that the UK's university sector is widely admired for its world class teaching and research, for example Covid-19 vaccine and climate change, with UK universities leading the world in response to major global challenges. The report also points to the increases, since 2016 in student numbers, with almost 2.8 million students studying in UK universities indicating the importance of universities to our society and economy. Despite all the pluses, there are still doubts about the success of our university sector particularly, the challenges faced by the teaching staff resulting in demotivation, anger and anxiety about what the future holds for them and their students (Ibid., 2022).

Qualified and efficient teachers are always needed in education institutions, however the pandemic and issues such as low pay and high workload have made recruitment and retention of teachers very difficult to achieve. One of England's teacher unions, NASUWT (2022) called for a strike over years of low pay, pay freezes and below inflation awards, resulting in many teachers pay being cut by 20% in real terms in the last twelve years. This is also a problem for university staff.

The increasing workload and productivity demands brought by the marketisation, massification, and technologization of higher education have consistently been associated with increasing work-related stress, burnout, and mental health difficulties (Fontinha et al., 2019; Johnson et al., 2019; Achinewhu-Nworgu, 2021). There is evidence that compromised staff wellbeing can lead to not only individual suffering, but also 'the wasteful loss to the sector of able and experienced personnel' (Morrish 2019; 45). Furthermore, poor well-being negatively impacts upon staff productivity and support to students, which may affect their success.

Recruitment is the process of generating a pool of capable staff to apply for employment to an organisation. Selection on the other hand, is a process used to choose from a pool of applicants suitable for a job, giving management goals and legal requirements (Bratton & Gold, 2017), whilst Gilmore and Williams (2007) see it as scrutinising applications and making decisions on who is employed. Recruitment and selection are closely related with other HRM processes, for example, HR planning, human resource development (HRD), and succession planning. In modern organisations, the key concepts of recruitment and selection are associated with attraction and retention of skilled employees.

Since HR is considered as an asset and HRM acts as an integrative part in business strategic process, the recruitment and selection of staff are considered to be important aspects of education policy. Effective recruitment and selection policy determines the quality of the employees in an organization, therefore, securing, developing, and motivating talented people with the right skills and approaches are crucial in strategic HRM education policy applicable to recruiting teachers. As an insider, the problem of recruiting teachers is experienced and felt; however, it differs from one establishment and programme to another. In addition, most international students pay huge amounts of fees to study in UK education institutions, so high quality teaching and learning, including support throughout their studies is essential and this can only be achieved by

recruiting qualified, permanent and competent teachers that cannot be found by recruiting from the streets.

# Hybrid teaching and learning

The future of education is moving to hybridisation imposed by the current pandemic with many institutions having opted for hybrid teaching and learning. This globally requires access to technology, electricity and computers to embrace the online facilities to teach and learn. Achinewhu-Nworgu (2020) in her research with the international students studying in the UK and students from a University in Mexico also, Nguyen (2020), identified home distancing and online studying, embracing virtual learning/technical problems, loss of friends and families, isolation, stress, home sickness, panic and inability to cope with coursework due to worries and stresses of the unknown. However, some providers have now opted for hybridisation in delivery, with some classes now running face to face and others online, and the stress of the combined tasks for both the teachers and students is overwhelming. The need to embrace use of technology in teaching and learning requires more training and development of teachers and students to be confident and competent in using Teams, WebEx, Zoom and other available means of virtual delivery. Globally the challenge is often availability of connection and machines to allow contact.

A BBC Report (BBC News, 2023) from 50 out of 160 universities surveyed showed that the hybrid method of delivery had lasted beyond the main pandemic crisis, due to high demand for places for students and the inability to fit numbers into lecture halls. Almost a third of university courses (28%) were still persisting with hybrid delivery in January 2023 compared to 4.1% in 2018/19 pre pandemic. Student opinions were diverse, from they liked the choice and flexibility, to it was not worth the thousands of pounds the course was coasting, with lectures online and it is not a good learning situation, being alone in your room watching a glorified teaching service – like watching a YouTube video.

Training and development is needed at this current time and also a key responsibility of every organisation, more so, at this current era of technological driven world after Covid 19. This has not only affected businesses in the private and public sectors but also education sectors with sudden changes in working practices as they change to hybrid delivery in teaching and learning. Training and development are important parts of organisational improvement to embrace changes in working practices, particularly in education institutions. An inclusive culture with a focus on embracing change and developing staff skills is noted in good organisations (Kum et al., 2014).

Change occurs in different ways and for us; it was sudden with no preparation to embrace it. The Covid-19 pandemic has introduced uncertainty and unrest for global businesses, including education institutions, resulting in plans of action (Tison et al., 2020), for an alternative way of working. Off the job and on the job training are needed to support teachers in coping with the demands of the new system. Training is an important way to fill skill gaps and address skill shortages within organisations. However, despite its importance, evidence suggests that employers, including in the UK, are training less and investing less in their workforce than they were 20 years ago (CIPD Report, 2018). Training is geared to development of new leadership norms and better communication that help in gaining more skills to embrace the current changes in work practices and improve performance. However, in a dynamically changing education era, it is not sufficient to provide one off employee training and development, hence teachers need continuous training and development to be competent and efficient in using technology in delivering teaching and learning.

The following section below provides a brief on methodology and comments from a few participants consulted on their views about the current challenges and future of education.

# Methodology and comments from current interview research

To address the questions asked above, we decided to hear from university teachers hence, a face to face interview was conducted with ten volunteers, six females and four males. The intention was to seek their views on current staffing and training issues and what should be done to tackle some of the challenges identified in our literature which impact on their teaching, learning and wellbeing.

Some of the findings and comments from the participants are reported as:

- continuous stress with heavy workload (D);
- lack of sufficient teachers, hence the full time staff are used to cover classes (P);
- working from home and commuting to university can be daunting and exhausting (H);
- in most cases the students and the teachers struggle with technology, particularly, the foreign students with limited access to technology or facilities to learn (A);
- the future of education is obvious and it is technologically driven and therefore, requires constant training and development to keep abreast with the demands of hybridisation in teaching and learning (F);
- teacher's wellbeing is a big issue, we need more teachers to teach and more admin staff to lessen workload from lecturers (G);
- recruitment and selection protocols are diminishing and changing to part time recruitment drives to catch up with emergency class cover, qualified and permanent teachers are needed to sustain students' experience (U);
- the success of the universities will depend on resources to facilitate the challenges of technology in providing quality teaching and learning (K);
- we are doing the best we could to teach students and the success rate is meeting our targets (X);
- despite all the foreseen and unforeseen challenges, the increase in students' enrolment is overwhelming with some universities putting people on waiting lists, an indication of meeting the demands of teaching and learning by all means (O).

# Conclusion

All the above demonstrates the pressures on education organisations and their staff. It is unsurprising that staff shortages and their work stress are affecting progress, students with special needs are not receiving enough support and training for hybrid learning is insufficient, whilst globally finances are under severe strain. These are but a few areas recently highlighted by UNESCO, which are seriously hindering improvement in education. The most interesting is that despite all the shortfalls and challenges evidenced in literature and from the participants interviewed, there is

continuous global demand for education in primary, secondary, further and higher education which demonstrates the need to seek solutions to remedy some of the challenges to improve education for all.

# **Recommendations**

The following are actions that need to occur in order to recover education and improve provision globally:

- Adequate finance is essential and all countries need to work to meet their target expenditure.
- Much improved monitoring of how money is spent and managed in order to avoid waste, is essential in all education organisations and from governments.
- Learners with special needs require better and more individual approaches to learning.
- Flexibility and improved support are essential to improve access and success for students and teachers alike.
- Effective recruitment and selection policy for teaching staff should be paramount in education policies.
- Proactive leadership and management, based on experience and ability to implement positive change is essential for success.
- Continuous training and development opportunities for teachers with financial support to embrace the high demands of technology in teaching and learning.

# References

- Achinewhu-Nworgu, E. (2020): Examining How Students Are Engaging in Their Teaching and Learning Activities: A Case Study of Higher Education Students in a London University, London Campus. Educational Reforms Worldwide (pp. 170-176). BCES Conference Books, Vol. 18. Sofia: Bulgarian Comparative Education Society.
- Achinewhu-Nworgu, E. (2021): Covid-19, a Rumour That Became Reality: The Impact on Business Education Students of Using Online Learning. New Challenges to Education: Lessons from Around the World (pp. 195-202). BCES Conference Books, Vol. 19. Sofia: Bulgarian Comparative Education Society.
- Al-Samarrai, S., Cerdan-Infantes, P., Bigarinova, A., Bodmer, J., Vital, M. J. A., Antoninis, M., Barakat, B. F., Murakami, Y. (2021): Education Finance Watch 2021. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.
- Arigatou International (2021): Inclusive Education for Migrants and Refugees. https://eiehub.org/ wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Report-HRC47-side-event-Final.pdf (Accessed 27.09.2022).
- BBC News (2023): Nearly a third of university courses still have hybrid teaching. BBC News online, 7th January.
- Bratton, J. & Gold, J. (2017): Human resource management: theory and practice. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Carney, S. (2022): Global Trajectories and Discourses in Comparative and International Education Policies and Research. Keynote speech delivered at the KIE Conference online.
- Channel 4 TV (2019): Dispatches Skipping School; Britain's Invisible Children. London: Children's Commissioner for England.
- CIPD (2018): Over-skilled and underused: investigating the untapped potential of UK skills. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD).

- Elks, S. (2020): How investing in girls' education could return billions in GDP. World Economic Forum / Thomson Reuters Foundation. https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/girls-school-africa-developing-nations-gdp (Accessed 16.08.2022).
- Fontinha, R., Easton, S. & Van Laar, D. (2019): Overtime and quality of working life in academics and non-academics: the role of perceived work-life balance. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 26 (2), 173-183.
- Gilmore, S. & Williams, S. (2007): Conceptualising the "personnel professional": a critical analysis of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development's professional qualification scheme. *Personnel Review*, 36(3), 398-414.
- Global Partnership for Education (2021): Girls' Education: the Path to Progress. https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/document/file/2021-03-GPE-factsheetgirls-education.pdf (Accessed 13.05.2021).
- Hilton, G. L. S. (2019): Academic women and the challenges they face; their stories then and now. *New Era in Education*, The Journal of the World Education Fellowship, 100(1), 31-46.
- Hilton, G. L. S. (2022a): Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 5: The Achievements, Concerns, and Workplace Bias against Women. *Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies*, 72(2), 228-244.
- Hilton, G. L. S. (2022b): NQT to ECT the New Induction Programme for Teachers in England: An Overview. *Towards the Next Epoch of Education* (pp. 101-108). BCES Conference Books, Vol. 20. Sofia: Bulgarian Comparative Education Society.
- Johnson, S. J., Willis, S. M. & Evans, J. (2019): An examination of stressors, strain, and resilience in academic and non-academic U.K. university job roles. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 26(2), 162-172.
- Kum, F. D., Cowden, R. & Karodia, A. M. (2014): The Impact of Training and Development on Employee Performance: A Case Study of ESCON Consulting. *Singaporean Journal of Business Economics, and Management Studies*, 3, 72-105.
- Leitch, N. (2022): Early Years Funding Woes Should Alarm All in Education. TES, 7th July.
- McCarthy, C. (2022): Tackling subtle ableism in the classroom: the students' view. TES, 15<sup>th</sup> September.
- Morrish, L. (2019): Pressure Vessels: The Epidemic of Poor Mental Health among Higher Education Staff. HEPI Paper 20. https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/HEPI-Pressure-Vessels-Occasional-Paper-20.pdf (Accessed 24.10.22).
- Mulholland, M. (2022): What does the future look like for alternative provision? TES, 7th July.
- NASUWT (2022): A Better Deal for England's Teachers. https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/news/ campaigns/better-deal-for-englands-teachers.html (Accessed 25.10.2022).
- Nguyen, K. (2020): How Has Covid 19 Impacted the International Students in the UK. https://www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/europe/united-kingdom/how-has-covid19impacted-international-students-uk (Accessed 24.10.22).
- OECD (2021): Education spending. DOI: 10.1787/ca274bac-en (Accessed 20.08.2022).
- Salmi, J. & D'Addio, A. (2020): Policies for achieving inclusion in higher education. *Policy Reviews in Higher Education*. DOI: 10.1080/23322969.2020.1835529 (Accessed 12.09.2022).
- Salmi, J. (2020): Higher Education and Inclusion. Background paper prepared for the 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report *Inclusion and Education: All Means All*. UNESCO. https:// unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373689 (Accessed 15.09.2022).
- Schleicher, A. (2022): Global trends shaping the future of education. Keynote speech at University of Edinburgh Learning and Teaching Conference, Blog of the speech. https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/learning-teaching-conference-2022/day-2-recordings/ (Accessed 20.09.2022).

- Singal, N. (2008): Working towards inclusion: reflections from the classroom. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(6), 1516-1529.
- Srivastava, M., de Boer, A. & Pihl, S-J. (2015): Inclusive education in developing countries: A closer look at its implementation in the last ten years. *Educational Review*, 67(2), 179-195.
- Tison, G. H., Avram, R., Kuhar, P., Abreau, S., Marcus, G. M., Pletcher, M. J. & Olgin, J. E. (2020): Worldwide Effect of COVID-19 on Physical Activity: A Descriptive Study. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 173(9), 767-770.
- UCU (2022): Congress and Sector Conferences 1-3 June 2022. Third Report of the Congress Business Committee. https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/12872/UCU2040C/pdf/CBC\_third\_report\_UCU2040C.pdf (Accessed 16.08.22).
- UN (2022): The Sustainable Goals Development Report. New York: United Nations.
- UNESCO (2015): Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action Towards Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Lifelong Learning for All. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO (2020): *Inclusion and Education*. Global Education Monitoring Report. https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/2020/inclusion (Accessed 14.09.2022).
- UNESCO (2021): Member States unite to increase investment in education. https://en.unesco.org/news/unesco-member-states-unite-increase-investment-education (Accessed 16.08.2022).
- UNESCO (2022a): Setting commitments: national SDG 4 benchmarks to transform education. UNESCO Institute for Statistics and Global Education Monitoring Report Team. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000382076 (Accessed 04.08.2022).
- UNESCO (2022b): The Turning Point: why we must transform education now. https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/turning-point-why-we-must-transform-education-now (Accessed 04.08.2022).
- UNESCO (n.d.): Equity. https://www.education-progress.org/en/articles/equity (Accessed 14.09.2022).
- World Bank (2019): Ending Learning Poverty: What Will It Take? Washington, D.C.: World Bank.
- World Bank (2022): *Quality Early Learning: Nurturing Children's Potential*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

Dr. Gillian L. S. Hilton, University of West London and BFWG, United Kingdom

Prof. Dr. Elizabeth Achinewhu-Nworgu, Ulster University, United Kingdom & Ireland