

XXII Annual International Conference 2024

**Bulgarian Comparative Education Society
(BCES)**

PROGRAM & ABSTRACTS



Sandanski, Bulgaria, 2–5 July 2024

Bulgarian Comparative Education Society

XXII Annual International Conference 2024

Education in Developing, Emerging, and Developed
Countries: Different Worlds, Common Challenges

Thematic Sections

1. Comparative and International Education & History of Education

Section Chair: Prof. Dr. Charl Wolhuter, North-West University, South Africa

2. International Education Issues

Section Chair: Prof. Dr. Charl Wolhuter, North-West University, South Africa

3. School Education: Policies, Innovations, Practices & Entrepreneurship

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

4. Higher Education & Teacher Education and Training

Section Chair: Prof. Dr. James Ogunleye, Academy of Innovation & Management,
United Kingdom

5. Law and Education

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

Conference Chair: Prof. Dr.habil. Nikolay Popov, Sofia University, Bulgaria

Assistant Conference Chair: Gergana Sakarski, PhD Student, Sofia University,
Bulgaria

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Conference Overall Program

Tuesday, 2 July 2024

09:30 – 13:00	Registration Pirin Conference Hall
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch Restaurant
14:00 – 16:30	Visit to the Archeological Museum in Sandanski
18:00 – 18:30	Conference opening Pirin Conference Hall
18:30 – 19:30	Keynote presentation Pirin Conference Hall
	Charl Wolhuter Education in Developing, Emerging, and Developed Countries: Different Worlds, Common Challenges: Comparative and International Education and the New World [<i>Abstract on p. 20</i>]
19:30 – 21:00	Welcome dinner Restaurant

Wednesday, 3 July 2024

09:00 – 11:00	Thematic Section 1 Pirin Conference Hall
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee / tea break
11:30 – 13:30	Thematic Section 1 Pirin Conference Hall
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch Restaurant
14:30 – 16:30	Thematic Section 2 Pirin Conference Hall
16:30 – 17:00	Coffee / tea break
17:00 – 19:00	Roundtable on Non-racialism Pirin Conference Hall

Thursday, 4 July 2024

09:00 – 11:00	Thematic Section 3 Pirin Conference Hall
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee / tea break
11:30 – 13:30	Thematic Section 3 Pirin Conference Hall
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch Restaurant
14:30 – 16:30	Thematic Section 3 Pirin Conference Hall
16:30 – 17:00	Coffee / tea break
17:00 – 19:00	Thematic Section 4 Pirin Conference Hall

Friday, 5 July 2024

09:00 – 11:00	Thematic Section 4 Pirin Conference Hall
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee / tea break
11:30 – 13:30	Thematic Section 4 Pirin Conference Hall
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch Restaurant
14:30 – 16:30	Thematic Section 5 Pirin Conference Hall
16:30 – 17:00	Coffee / tea break
17:00 – 19:00	Thematic Section 5 Pirin Conference Hall
19:30 – 22:00	Farewell dinner Restaurant

Thematic Sections Program

Thematic Section 1: Comparative and International Education & History of Education

Wednesday, 3 July 2024

09:00 – 09:30	Nomthandazo Buthelezi & Nonhlanhla Desiree Maseko Supporting the Transition of Learners with Learning Disabilities into a Special Class: An Informal Transition Support Training Model [<i>Abstract on p. 32</i>]
09:30 – 10:00	Nikolay Popov & Vera Spasenović [Presenter: Nikolay Popov] Introducing a School Counselor Autonomy-Control Status (SCACS) Classification [<i>Abstract on p. 31</i>]
10:00 – 10:30	Richie Rizkala Elian The Lecture Course: An Obsolete and Ineffective Approach? [<i>Abstract on p. 34</i>]
10:30 – 11:00	Aigerim Kosherbayeva, Ardak Alipbek, Rinad Kosherbayev, Aknyr Baimahova, Albina Niyazova Effective Ways of Modernization and Internationalization of Education in Kazakhstan [<i>Abstract on p. 15</i>]
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee / tea break
11:30 – 12:00	Louise Fullard, Charl Wolhuter, Aaron Nhlapo & Hennie Steyn Exploring Programme Delivery in the Further Education and Training Phase of South African Secondary Schools amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic: Challenges, Mitigation Strategies and Transformative Approaches [Prerecorded presentation / Presenter: Louise Fullard] [<i>Abstract on p. 28</i>]
12:00 – 12:30	Lorna M Dreyer & Annaly M Strauss Affirming Inclusive Education at University: A Case of Two Sub-Saharan African Universities [<i>Abstract on p. 27</i>]
12:30 – 13:00	Aikaterini Sklavenitou Secondary Teachers' Education Programs to Promote a Positive Learning Climate through the Cases of France, Greece, and England: The Planning of a Research [<i>Abstract on p. 16</i>]

13:00 – 13:30	Nikolaos Neveskiotis Life Skills as an Integral Part of a Comprehensive Education: A Research Proposal for Educational Policies in Compulsory Education in Greece, Germany, and Finland [Prerecorded presentation] [<i>Abstract on p. 31</i>]
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13:30 – 14:30	Lunch Restaurant
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Thematic Section 2: International Education Issues

Wednesday, 3 July 2024

14:30 – 15:00	Obed Mfum-Mensah Between “Scylla and Charybdis”? Trusteeship, Africa-China Relations, and Education Policy and Practice [<i>Abstract on p. 33</i>]
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15:00 – 15:30	Gergana Sakarski Are Homeschoolers Happy with Their Educational Experience? [<i>Abstract on p. 24</i>]
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15:30 – 16:00	Coenraad Jurgens Injuries in Mechanical Technology Workshops at South African Public Schools [<i>Abstract on p. 21</i>]
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16:00 – 16:30	Amy Sarah Padayachee A Silent Revolution is Unfolding and the Weapon is Collaborative Leadership [<i>Abstract on p. 17</i>]
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16:30 – 17:00	Coffee / tea break
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Roundtable

Illuminating the Status of Non-racialism at South African Universities through Empirical Research and Personal Observations and Experiences

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Vimbi Mahlangu, South Africa

Wednesday, 3 July 2024

17:00 – 18:30

[*Abstract on p. 26*]

Thematic Section 3: School Education: Policies, Innovations, Practices & Entrepreneurship

Thursday, 4 July 2024

09:00 – 09:30	Gillian L. S. Hilton School Counsellors in England, Tackling a Children’s Mental Health Crisis [<i>Abstract on p. 24</i>]
09:30 – 10:00	Ricardo Lozano Educational Leadership Matters: Educational Leadership Preparation Matters Too [<i>Abstract on p. 34</i>]
10:00 – 10:30	Boledi Melita (Masehela) Moloto Exploring the Influence of Stigmatization of Sexually Abused Learners at Rural Secondary Schools in Limpopo Province, South Africa [<i>Abstract on p. 19</i>]
10:30 – 11:00	Richie Rizkala Elian & Renee Lupu Gorduza The Use of Technology in Teaching: A Perspective from Both Teachers and Students [<i>Abstract on p. 35</i>]
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee / tea break
11:30 – 12:00	Gillian L. S. Hilton Dealing with a Nightmare Situation – Teachers in English Schools and Trans/gender Distressed/gender Dysphoria Students [<i>Abstract on p. 25</i>]
12:00 – 12:30	Anthony Brown From Margins to Mainstream: A South African School’s Journey to Transgender Inclusion [<i>Abstract on p. 17</i>]
12:30 – 13:00	Adele Pullen, Nonhlanhla Maseko & Matjhabedi Mazibuko [Presenter: Adele Pullen] The Role of Families and Schools in Modifying Challenging Behaviour of High School Learners [<i>Abstract on p. 15</i>]
13:00 – 13:30	Aygul Salieva Mehmedova “My Friends Matter!”: Peer Influence on Subject Choice Selection in a South African Private School [<i>Abstract on p. 18</i>]
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch Restaurant

14:30 – 15:00	Francinah Masola Eco-systemic Factors Influencing the Experience of Fear in Young Children [<i>Abstract on p. 23</i>]
15:00 – 15:30	Claudio-Rafael Vasquez-Martinez & Francisco Flores-Cuevas Reflections on Language Development in Infants [<i>Abstract on p. 20</i>]
15:30 – 16:00	Nonhlanhla Desiree' Maseko & Themba Eric Motloug [Presenter: Nonhlanhla Maseko] Challenges and Benefits of Transitioning to a Special Education Setting: The Phase of Adjustment [<i>Abstract on p. 33</i>]
16:00 – 16:30	Nkhensani Susan Thuketana Using the Mean Length of Utterance Tool to Determine Young Learners' Educational Support Needs Post the COVID-19 Pandemic [<i>Abstract on p. 32</i>]
16:30 – 17:00	Coffee / tea break

Thematic Section 4: Higher Education & Teacher Education and Training

Thursday, 4 July 2024

17:00 – 17:30	Deliwe M Kumalo Teacher's Attitude and Perceptions to Implementing Alternative Methods of Discipline [<i>Abstract on p. 21</i>]
17:30 – 18:00	Lina M. Methi Psychological Capital of Resiliency for Students with Disabilities Post-Covid 19 Pandemic [<i>Abstract on p. 27</i>]

Friday, 5 July 2024

09:00 – 09:30	James Ogunleye Controlling Student Number: the Challenges of Managing Exponential Growth of Students Seeking University Admissions in Nigeria – an update [<i>Abstract on p. 25</i>]
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09:30 – 10:00	Matjhabedi Mazibuko & Nonhlanhla Maseko Unveiling Student Identity: Understanding and Nurturing the Student of the 21 st Century [<i>Abstract on p. 29</i>]
10:00 – 10:30	Saroj Pandey Reimagining and Rejuvenating Teacher Education for Equitable Inclusive and Cohesive Society [<i>Abstract on p. 36</i>]
10:30 – 11:00	Seshoka Joseph Rapeta Exploring the Effects of Teacher Mobility on Learners' Rights to Basic Education [<i>Abstract on p. 37</i>]
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee / tea break
11:30 – 12:00	Mpipi Zipporah Sedio Investigating E-tutors Experiences of Facilitating a Module Through Learning Management System: A Case Study of Open Distance E-Learning Institution [<i>Abstract on p. 29</i>]
12:00 – 12:30	Mubi Frieda Mavuso Exploring the Experiences of Employees with Disabilities at an Open Learning Institution: Prospects for Support [<i>Abstract on p. 30</i>]
12:30 – 13:00	Boitumelo Molebogeng Diale Using Indigenous Knowledge Practices to Support First-Year First-Generation African Students in Their Career Transition to Higher Education in South Africa [<i>Abstract on p. 19</i>]
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch Restaurant

Thematic Section 5: Law and Education

Friday, 5 July 2024

14:30 – 15:00	Elizabeth Achinewhu-Nworgu Examine the Notion That AI Has Come to Replace Education Jobs in Classroom Teaching and Learning Done by Human Beings [<i>Abstract on p. 22</i>]
15:00 – 15:30	Vimbi Petrus Mahlangu Exploring Experiences of Prisoners Regarding Studying in Incarceration in a Distance Mode [<i>Abstract on p. 39</i>]

15:30 – 16:00	Saltiel Khololo Collen Mataboge Examining the Influence of Covid -19 Pandemic on Efficacy of Participative Management in Primary Schools [<i>Abstract on p. 35</i>]
16:00 – 16:30	Mabatho Sedibe Career Opportunities for Diverse Women in South Africa with Special Reference to Aviation: Life Orientation Perspectives [<i>Abstract on p. 28</i>]
16:30 – 17:00	Coffee / tea break
17:00 – 17:30	Tebogo Jillian Mampane & Sharon Thabo Mampane Mentoring Higher Education Leaders and Managers through Contextual Intelligence [<i>Abstract on p. 38</i>]
17:30 – 18:00	Elizabeth Achinewhu-Nworgu, Queen Chioma Nworgu & Chinuru Achinewhu Challenges Faced by International Students Studying in the United Kingdom with Main Focus on Nigerian Students [<i>Abstract on p. 23</i>]
18:00 – 18:30	Tebogo Jillian Mampane The Induction and Mentorship of New Practitioners in Early Childhood Education Centres: The South African Context [<i>Abstract on p. 37</i>]

List of Registered Participants

Name	Title/Degree	Institution, Country
Adele Pullen	M.Ed.	University of Johannesburg, South Africa
Aigerim Kosherbayeva	Prof. Dr. Ped. Sc.	Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Kazakhstan
Aikaterini Sklavenitou	PhD Candidate	University of Crete, Greece
Amy Sarah Padayachee	Dr.	Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa
Anthony Brown	Prof. Dr.	Stellenbosch University, South Africa
Ardak Alipbek	Assoc. Prof. Dr.	South Kazakhstan State Pedagogical University, Kazakhstan
Aygul Salieva Mehmedova	PhD Student	University of Johannesburg, South Africa
Boitumelo Molebogeng Diale	Prof. Dr.	University of South Africa, South Africa
Boledi Melita (Masehela) Moloto	Dr.	University of South Africa, South Africa
Charl Wolhuter	Prof. Dr.	North-West University, South Africa
Claudio-Rafael Vasquez- Martínez	Prof. Dr.	Universidad de Guadalajara, México
Coenraad Jurgens	Dr.	North-West University, South Africa

Name	Title/Degree	Institution, Country
Deliwe Maria Kumalo	Dr.	University of South Africa, South Africa
Elizabeth Achinewhu-Nworgu	Prof. Dr.	Ulster University, United Kingdom & Ireland
Francinah Masola	Dr.	University of Pretoria, South Africa
Francisco Flores-Cuevas	Dr.	CU de la Costa University of Guadalajara, Mexico
Gergana Sakarski	PhD Student	Sofia University, Bulgaria
Gertrude Shotte	Dr.	Middlesex University, London, United Kingdom
Gillian L. S. Hilton	Dr.	University of West London, United Kingdom
Gordana Stankovska	Prof. Dr.	University of Tetova, Republic of North Macedonia
Jacqueline O'Flaherty	Dr.	University of South Australia
James Ogunleye	Prof. Dr.	Academy of Innovation & Management, United Kingdom
Kalina Popova	M.Ed.	12 th Secondary School, Sofia, Bulgaria
Karen L. Biraimah	Prof. Dr.	University of Central Florida, USA
Lina Mmakgabo Methi	Dr.	University of South Africa, South Africa
Lorna M Dreyer	Prof. Dr.	Stellenbosch University, South Africa

Name	Title/Degree	Institution, Country
Louise Fullard	MEd	North-West University, South Africa
Mabatho Sedibe	Dr.	University of Johannesburg, South Africa
Mashraky Mustary	PhD Student	Sophia University, Japan
Matjhabedi Mazibuko	Dr.	Vaal University of Technology (VUT), South Africa
Mpipo Zipporah Sedio	Dr.	University of South Africa, South Africa
Mubi Frieda Mavuso	Assoc. Prof. Dr.	University of South Africa, South Africa
Nikolaos Neveskiotis	MSc	University of Crete, Greece
Nikolay Popov	Prof. Dr.habil.	Sofia University, Bulgaria
Nkhensani Susan Thuketana	Dr.	University of Pretoria, South Africa
Nomthandazo Buthelezi	Lecturer	Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa
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Name	Title/Degree	Institution, Country
Ricardo Lozano	Assoc. Prof. Dr.	Texas A&M International University, USA
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Rinad Kosherbayev	Dr.	National Center for Teacher Training “Orleu”, Kazakhstan
Saltiel Khololo Collen Mataboge	Dr.	University of South Africa, South Africa
Saroj Pandey	Prof. Dr.	Indira Gandhi National Open University, India
Seshoka Joseph Rapeta	Dr.	University of South Africa, South Africa
Sharon Thabo Mampane	Prof. Dr.	University of South Africa, South Africa
Tebogo Jillian Mampane	Dr.	University of South Africa, South Africa
Vimbi Petrus Mahlangu	Prof. Dr.	University of South Africa, South Africa

Abstracts

In alphabetical order by first name

Adele Pullen; Nonhlanhla Maseko & Matjhabedi Mazibuko

The Role of Families and Schools in Modifying Challenging Behaviour of High School Learners

A family-school accountability approach towards behaviour modification of high school learners has become an urgent need as behavioural problems have led to learner suspension, expulsion or dropping out of school. Historically families and schools had distinct roles where families were responsible for extracurricular education while schools oversaw the formal education of learners. Families are the first educators of their children therefore their involvement can greatly impact and have an influence on learner behaviour and learning, regardless of the social or cultural background of the family. On the other hand, schools have the important responsibility to help nurture and teach future generations laying a firm educational foundation for the future of learners. Although the responsibility of a family-school partnership lies mainly on the school, this partnership needs to be a two-way dynamic to work. The success of this partnership is dependent on the 'fit' between the family's cares and concerns for the learner and those of the school. Additionally, this partnership is not formed by choice but is a pairing that occurs by the common interest in modifying the behaviour of the learner. Hence, "conflict" may occur but through mutual responsibility, trust, and respect this could be eradicated. Another challenge noted is how often schools and families work in isolation to address high school learners' behavioural problems. This study focuses on the roles of families and schools in this partnership towards modifying the behaviour of high school learners. It suggests guidelines to be used by families and schools in this venture.

Keywords: behaviour modification, family, parental involvement, partnership, school

Aigerim Kosherbayeva, Ardak Alipbek, Rinad Kosherbayev, Aknyr Baimahova, Albina Niyazova

Effective Ways of Modernization and Internationalization of Education in Kazakhstan

This paper examines the problem of modernization of the national education model, based on the program documents Mangilik El and Rukhani Zhangyru, the project New humanitarian knowledge: 100 new textbooks in the Kazakh language, Daryn programs, etc., aimed at the spiritual development of the nation. One of the ways to internationalize education in Kazakhstan is the participation in QS World University Rankings, which highlights the top five universities: Asfandiyarov Kazakh National Medical University, Satbayev University, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Gumilev Eurasian National University, and Nazarbayev University. In addition to the five universities described, nine more, highlighted in the QS subject rankings, deserve

attention. Among these universities is Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, which implements educational programs in teaching professions developed jointly with foreign partners. The review also covers the following path of modernization of education in Kazakhstan, which takes place in preschool and school education. Since 2009, Kazakhstan has been actively participating in international PISA studies, the results of which have contributed to the implementation of important educational initiatives implemented in the country. The study of such experience contributed to the design of a scientific study on the topic Theory and technology of a comprehensive psychological and pedagogical assessment of the developing potential of the school's educational environment using the international SAKERS (modified version). The quality of school life and educational outcomes of students directly depend on the comfort of the school educational environment, in addition, the problem is aggravated by the risks and threats of globalization and changes in the modern world. The international SACERS (School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale) tool allows for the assessment and measurement of the educational environment according to 7 criteria: the internal space and furniture of the school; health and safety; active activity and pastime; interaction; educational process; staff development; special needs for students with disabilities. At this stage, according to the project on measuring the educational environment using international scales, SAKERS (this term is used in Kazakhstan for SACERS) is conducted in 7 Kazakhstani schools, different in structure and location. The paper ends with strategies for solving problems regarding the orientation of the educational system of Kazakhstan to international cooperation.

Keywords: Kazakhstan, modernization of education, internationalization of education, quality of school life, educational outcomes, university rankings

Aikaterini Sklavenitou

Secondary Teachers' Education Programs to Promote a Positive Learning Climate through the Cases of France, Greece, and England: The Planning of a Research

This paper presents an ongoing comparative study of secondary teachers' education programs in France, Greece, and England, with a primary focus on strategies aimed at cultivating a positive learning environment in schools. Recent studies have underlined the significance of teachers' pedagogical competence formation as a determinant element which will form their future in the teaching profession. Globalization and technological development being major characteristics of our century have had an undeniable impact on educational thought and practice which imposes the need to acquire new types of knowledge and skills to ensure teachers' capacity to deal with the needs of the new generation. Secondary teachers must implement targeted handlings towards a special age group – adolescence – in combination with the principles of the curriculum. Through interviews and focus groups with secondary teachers of various specialization and teaching experience the aim is to understand their needs and level of preparation for the purpose of entering the classroom equipped to conduct their demanding role and to explore the ways the

undergraduate studies of secondary teachers can be enriched both theoretically – and especially – at a practical level.

Keywords: secondary teachers' education, pedagogical competence, school climate

Amy Sarah Padayachee

A Silent Revolution is Unfolding and the Weapon is Collaborative Leadership

The preponderance of literature associated with school violence illuminates the severity of its manifestation in schools both nationally and internationally. The impact of school violence on students' physical and emotional well-being cannot be understated as this is commensurate with student academic achievement. The South African Government's National Development Plan 2030 identifies the improvement of the quality of public services as critical to achieving transformation. It is germane to then consider how an education system entrenched in a long-standing history of violence can be adopted in an agenda of transformation. In his 2023 State of the Nation Address, President Cyril Ramaphosa stated: "Schools must be safe and allow for effective learning and teaching". Behind this pronouncement, is a silent revolution unfolding. South African schools, now nearly three decades into democracy, are focusing on collaborative leadership to contribute meaningfully to the redress of violence in school environments and move toward trauma-informed practices. A study comprising 121 schools in South Africa reveals that school management teams are employing collaborative leadership to address such behaviours. Underpinned by the Collaborative Leadership Theory, this mixed methods research design investigates how collaborative leadership is employed by educational practitioners to address school violence in 21st century classrooms. The results of this study have the potential to offer an approach towards addressing school violence in South African schools, despite the complexities of an education system stemming from a violent past which remains evident in South African classrooms today.

Keywords: collaboration, collaborative leadership, leadership, management, transformation, violence

Anthony Brown

From Margins to Mainstream: A South African School's Journey to Transgender Inclusion

While many South African schools reinforce discrimination against gender diversity, this study explores one semi-rural school embracing three transgender-identifying learners. Through art-based participatory methodologies, participants expressed their transitioning experiences as openly embodying transgender female learners. Three key positives emerged: student self-concept, staff receptiveness, and school leadership responsibility. Second, individual teachers-initiated understandings subsequently rippling outward in policy implementation. Third, the principal held authority in convincing broader acceptance through dialogue invoking constitutional values. Despite lacking an official inclusion protocol for sexual and gender diversity, the

school community displayed care, support, and affirmation as these students socially and academically transitioned. Their experiences provide a glimmer of hope, offering lessons in fostering empowering spaces for gender inclusion. On their first day, they wore the female uniform while their birth certificates which is necessary for school registration indicated male sex assigned at birth. Individual teachers advocated allowing sincere self-expression after administration noticed the discrepancy. As more staff developed an understanding of diverse identities, classroom atmospheres grew more enabling. Peers asked thoughtful questions, facilitating informal peer education. Greatest allies emerged as security staff preventing bullying and cleaners offering breaktime encouragement to “be themselves”. Overlooked non-teaching staff should participate more fully in inclusion awareness and empowerment. While starting unprepared, this school transitioned alongside these students through incidental recruitment commitment. This research spotlights education potentials. When exposed, most educators will widen agency and learning opportunities inclusively. Recommendations include training all staff in gender literacy and identity support mechanisms while ensuring safe, accessible facilities. Mirroring society, schools can act as microcosms transforming prejudice. This paper shares marginalization risks but focuses on integration possibilities – optimism emerges by recentering constitutional ideals of equality within regional school practices.

Keywords: transgender students, gender diversity, inclusive education, school culture

Aygul Salieva Mehmedova

“My Friends Matter!”: Peer Influence on Subject Choice Selection in a South African Private School

Socio-contextual influences, such as peers, affect many learners in their Grade 9 school subject choices in secondary schools impacting their envisaged career trajectories. Despite availability of numerous studies on peer presence in secondary school settings, evidence remains indicative of peer impact on test performance, tertiary education attendance, and fields of specialization. Grade 9 learners are required to nominate seven school subjects for the Further Education and Training (FET) phase of their secondary school lives - a three-year period from Grades 10–12 in which chosen subjects carry potentially significant implications on intended future careers. This study inquired into the nature of peer group influence on FET phase learners’ Grade 9 subject choices. Purposive sampling was employed to select four FET phase learners, aged between 15 and 16 years as research participants for individual semi-structured interviews, hand-made collages, and a focus-group interview at their school. The data gathered was analysed using qualitative content data analysis in the identification of themes and recurring patterns. Due attention was given to ethical considerations throughout the study. Findings indicated that two of the four participants had encountered positive peer influence on their subject choice selections. One participant reported strong familial and teacher influence on his subject choice selections, and another expressed her preference for independent subject choices. Arguably, the presence of peers during Grade 9 subject choice selections could be incorporated into the design of current and future policies; and

contextually appropriate school career guidance practices incorporated to understand the drivers of peer influence and the nature of peer interactions among Grade 9 learners' subject choices.

Keywords: peer influence, subject choices, senior phase, Further Education and Training (FET) phase, school career guidance practices

Boitumelo Molebogeng Diale

Using Indigenous Knowledge Practices to Support First-Year First-Generation African Students in Their Career Transition to Higher Education in South Africa

The study explored indigenous knowledge systems' role in tutoring first-year first-generation African students (FYFGAS) transitioning from high school to higher education. During this process, tutors and students implicitly engage in indigenous knowledge systems that allow for enculturation and holistic support for FYFGAS. Drawing on Schlossberg's Career Transitioning Theory as an underpinning framework, the researcher explored how FYFGAS experienced tutoring sessions as a positive conduit toward their successful transition into their first year at university, embedded in the tutor's use of indigenous knowledge systems processes. This paper adopted a phenomenological qualitative design within an interpretive paradigm. Data were collected using a semi-structured individual interview schedule with six FYFGAS and were analysed through inductive thematic analysis. The findings revealed that tutors were role models to FYFGAS as they transitioned. Tutors further acted as agents of empowerment, thus fulfilling the role of change agents. Students experienced tutoring sessions to promote active student participation. Through their active engagement, students developed problem-solving and knowledge-acquisition skills. There is a need for higher education institutions to build systems that embrace the diverse indigenous knowledge systems brought by FYFGAS that will smoothly transition them into higher education.

Keywords: indigenous knowledge systems, tutoring, higher education, first-year, first-generation students, career transition

Boledi Melita (Masehela) Moloto

Exploring the Influence of Stigmatization of Sexually Abused Learners at Rural Secondary Schools in Limpopo Province, South Africa

The purpose of the paper is to explore the influence of stigmatization of sexually abused learners at secondary schools in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. The main question to be asked is "To what extent do we know about the influence of stigmatization of sexually abused learners at rural secondary schools?" There is an outcry that there is an ever-increasing number of learners who are sexually abused at schools and most of the cases are not even reported. Besides the fact that victims are psychologically, emotionally, and physically affected, some of them are even stigmatised. The stigmatisation brings shame, confusion, depression, and low self-

esteem and as a result they end up leaving school at an early stage. A qualitative approach and interpretive paradigm will be followed in exploring the influence of stigmatization of sexually abused learners at schools. Methods that will be used in gathering information will be through literature review, and analysis of documents that addresses National and Provincial sexual abuse policies in schools. The findings are intended to focus on how stigmatisation contributes negatively to the well-being of the sexually abused learners at school.

Keywords: stigmatisation, learner, sexually abused, secondary schools

Charl Wolhuter

Education in Developing, Emerging, and Developed Countries: Different Worlds, Common Challenges: Comparative and International Education and the New World

After having harboured a very nominalistic conceptualisation of the education systems of the world before 1950, scholars of Comparative and International Education embraced the developed-developing countries dichotomy since the middle of the twentieth century. In this paper it is argued that this conceptualisation of the world has become increasingly anachronistic and also problematic for a number of reasons. Other taxons that have been suggested among scholars in the field include emerging countries, BRICS, and the Global South. The merits of the employment of the taxon of Global South are argued for. At the same time a host of challenges are besetting the education sector globally, in the Global North as well as in the Global South. These challenges can be subsumed into three categories, namely access to and participation in education (quantitative dimension), education quality and education equality. It is argued that the education experience of the Global South with respect to all three of these are also instructive for the Global North. It is also suggested that the Global South coming to its right, and levelling the current unequal playing field in Comparative and International Education and rectifying the preposterous structure of knowledge in the field, may well be the defining feature of a next phase in the historical evolution of the field of Comparative and International Education.

Keywords: BRICS, Comparative and International Education, developed countries, developing countries, emerging countries, Global South

Claudio-Rafael Vasquez-Martinez, Francisco Flores-Cuevas, Felipe-Anastacio González-González, Luz-Maria Zuñiga-Medina, Graciela-Esperanza Giron-Villacis, Irma-Carolina Gonzalez-Sanchez, Joaquin Torres-Mata

Reflections on Language Development in Infants

Language is the basis of human communication and is the most important key to complete mental development and thinking. Therefore, children must learn to communicate using appropriate language. For this to happen, the development of language in the child must be understood as a biological process, complete with internal laws and with marked stages of evolution. Despite the research that has been

conducted, the origin of language is not clearly understood. Language is the faculty that human beings use to communicate with other people through a system of linguistic signs. It is the product of integration of various semantic, morphosyntactic, and phonological components.

Keywords: language development, empiricist approach, nativist approach, cognitive approach, mental processes

Coenraad Jurgens

Injuries in Mechanical Technology Workshops at South African Public Schools

Ensuring the safety of learners is paramount in schools, particularly in workshops where hands-on learning takes place. Mechanical Technology teachers bear the responsibility for ensuring learners' safe participation in activities, guided by specific safety management elements that dictate their duty of care and legal obligations. This paper presents findings from a comprehensive investigation conducted in 220 technical schools across South Africa, offering Mechanical Technology as a subject. Combining quantitative and qualitative methods, the investigation aimed to assess the frequency, severity, and management of accidents and injuries occurring in these workshops, while also examining the underlying reasons for such incidents. Results indicated that a significant number of accidents were attributed to unsafe behavior, including failure to wear or correctly use personal protective equipment. Furthermore, the study revealed a notable lack of awareness among participating teachers regarding injury reporting procedures and record-keeping practices. In response to these findings, it is recommended that Mechanical Technology teachers enhance their understanding of their legal obligations and responsibilities concerning learner safety. This entails strict adherence to safety policies and regulations to ensure a secure environment for all learners involved in workshop activities. Moreover, school governing bodies are urged to fulfill their legal mandate by developing and implementing effective safety policies for workshop environments. Such policies serve as crucial tools in reducing and preventing injuries, thereby mitigating legal liabilities for the department, teachers, and schools alike.

Keywords: safe school environment, legislation, accidents and incidents, injuries

Deliwe M Kumalo

Teacher's Attitude and Perceptions to Implementing Alternative Methods of Discipline

The punitive degrading discipline methods aligned to the previous dispensation in SA governance was outdated and alternative methods of discipline were contextualised in 1994. Alternative to corporal punishment policy was introduced to guide teachers on disciplining learners' transgressions or disruptive behaviours in their classrooms. The study aimed to explore primary schools' purposively sampled teacher in 3 conveniently sampled township schools' attitudes, perceptions, and experiences of implanting discipline in their classrooms. The theoretical lens used was multi-theory-

model, and deductive thematic data analyses was used. Results indicated that teachers were still using corporal punishment to discipline learners' disruptive behaviours. Corporal punishment despite being violent in some instances and degrading to learners was preferred by teachers. Furthermore, results suggested, teachers struggled to make the mind shift needed to encompass alternative discipline, as they still maintain that the way in which they were discipline during their schooling is the best for their learners despite the high stakes involved if found guilty of using the outlawed discipline methods. The lack of knowledge of alternative methods of discipline, difficulty with attitude and perception change brings about the challenges of policy implementation and unwarranted practice in the implementation of discipline. Significance of the study highlight violence as a trusted way of resolving issues and as a form of trusted discipline which pose a challenge for restorative justice and safe schools' principles. This highlighted the much-needed knowledge and interventions to assist teachers to be susceptible to change; research exploring psychological nature of discipline and teacher training programs in alternative methods of discipline lessening violent behaviours in schools.

Keywords: school violence, alternative methods of discipline, mental health and discipline in schools, teacher, leaner discipline

Elizabeth Achinewhu-Nworgu

Examine the Notion That AI Has Come to Replace Education Jobs in Classroom Teaching and Learning Done by Human Beings

There is a growing concern that AI is likely to replace the work done face to face in the classroom by teachers. The concerns also extend to the students' use of AI to complete assignments which could impact on their grades either positive or negative and in some cases, when a student work is detected with high AI the work could be classified as plagiarism if AI usage is not declared. On another note, there are increasing debates about the use of AI as a valid tool to support work completed by human beings. Whatever maybe the growing concerns, many researchers have argued that AI is not likely to replace education jobs such as teaching and learning done by teachers and education administrators. The purpose of this paper is to explore debates around the use of AI in education, mostly in teaching and learning and assessment of students' work and the link to the university misconduct policy. Teachers' opinions on integrating AI in the classroom are illuminated by empirical evidence gathered via interviews. A lot of educators respond to AI in different ways. Some of the debates falls around AI as God's sent tools that can help reduce some of the admin work and assessment of students' work such as helping with multiple choice questions, on the other hand, some students have been penalised and in some cases failed their work due to use of AI in completing their assignments without acknowledging the use. In addition, others have argued that AI has come to replace the work done by teachers and are anxious about AI in education jobs done by teachers, hence would not bear the idea for classroom teaching and learning.

Keywords: AI, education, teaching and learning, teachers, students and classroom

Elizabeth Achinewhu-Nworgu, Queen Chioma Nworgu & Chinuru Achinewhu

Challenges Faced by International Students Studying in the United Kingdom with Main Focus on Nigerian Students

The rationale for this research paper is to examine the challenges faced by international students with focus on Nigerian students embracing the British education system and impact on their motivation and academic performance. The paper presents a critical overview in relation to the barriers faced by Nigerian students in terms of obtaining and maintaining their visas, seeking employment, cultural integration, and access to education and how these challenges impact on their motivation and academic performance. The study utilizes both quantitative and qualitative research methods to provide a comprehensive analysis of the challenges faced by Nigerian students in regard to studying in the UK and keeping up to visa requirements with limited working hours given to study. To ascertain the degree of impact, a primary data was carried out to hear from few of the students. Findings of research shows that majority of the Nigerian students that came to study in the UK had high expectations with the hope that coming to study and work in the UK was the best option to escape from the problem of high unemployment and hardship faced back in their home countries. Some expressed the disappointments on how they struggled to find accommodation with family and not sure if coming to the UK was worth the money, they paid to facilitate their study visa. The most disappointed expectations were the cost of living and not being able to get the twenty hours jobs allowed to work while studying to help them with excessive cost of living. Some felt that more support is needed to help international students in their studies in the UK considering the high fees paid to gain British education.

Keywords: international students, Nigerian students in the UK, language barriers, cultural shock, racism, discrimination, pedagogical differences

Francinah Masola

Eco-systemic Factors Influencing the Experience of Fear in Young Children

The purpose of this study was to investigate eco-systemic factors influencing the experience of fear in young children. Using a qualitative method, a sample of 12 grade three learners' drawings, 12 parents, three grade three teachers from low socio-economic status, middle socio-economic status and high socio-economic status participated in the study. Multiple case study design was employed to explore and compare what influences fearful experiences among Grade 3 learners from three different socio-economic classes. Data was collected through learners' drawings, narratives, audio recordings, semi-structured interviews and field notes. Thematic inductive analysis was employed to analyse data. The results highlighted that negligence; nightmare, domestic violence, bullying, terrifying television programmes, COVID-19, kidnapping and murder are causing fear in young children. The findings suggest that adversities, television content, kidnapping and murder as well as COVID-19 have negative effects on the well-being of the children causing fears that are not normal for their age group. The persistent exposure to fearful experiences interferes

with the ability of the learners to learn effectively in the classroom. Teachers' lack of competencies in supporting learners to cope with fear add to low participation of learners in the classroom. Therefore, teachers need adequate support and training to deal with learners experiencing fear. The contribution of this study is to provide various strategies which can be employed by teachers and parents to support young children to cope with fearful feelings. Schools should support teachers and parents to assist young children to cope with fear and the kinds of capacity-building programmes that will help teachers, social workers and police officers to become partners in education.

Keywords: fear, young children, teachers, eco-systemic factors, violence

Gergana Sakarski

Are Homeschoolers Happy with Their Educational Experience?

Homeschooling, as a controversial educational practice, raises many questions about its outcomes, which still remain unanswered. The homeschooling population has been growing over the past years, as has interest in this educational paradigm. The increased accessibility and use of emerging information technologies also hold significance in facilitating access to knowledge and contributing to the expansion of this educational trend. In this context, numerous families contemplate homeschooling for several reasons. Yet, the decision to homeschool or not their children is often difficult, as the outcomes are not predictable. Researchers have explored the academic achievements of homeschooling; however, a more significant question remains unanswered: Are homeschoolers happy? This paper aims to provide insight into homeschoolers' perceptions of this matter. Research findings on the life satisfaction of homeschoolers presented here were based on the anonymous responses of an online survey collected between July 2022 and July 2023 from 33 current or former homeschoolers from five countries. This study used the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) to evaluate the well-being of homeschooled individuals who self-assessed their educational experience as well. The paper also examines the advantages and disadvantages of the educational practice as perceived by homeschoolers themselves in an attempt to provide a picture of the satisfaction of homeschoolers with their educational journey.

Keywords: homeschooling, home education, emotional well-being, happiness, life satisfaction, SWLS

Gillian L. S. Hilton

School Counsellors in England, Tackling a Children's Mental Health Crisis

This paper explores the current provision and roles of school counsellors in England's schools. Government interventions are discussed and the ongoing problems with the deteriorating mental health of children and adolescents, caused by social pressures, and then the Covid 19 pandemic, addressed. The numbers of counsellors available has risen, but is in no way equal to the provision in other countries and the response of the

National Health Service (NHS) is also under severe pressure. Attitudes of parents, teachers and young people to counselling are explored, together with the wide-ranging qualifications and duties required of counsellors in England's schools. The conclusion is that the change of attitude by government towards counselling in schools, is still too little and too late, as many children have no access to in-school help with mental issues, or teachers the support they need to understand the mental health problems affecting children in their classes.

Keywords: counselling in school, mental health, qualifications for counsellors, Covid 19 effects on children's mental health

Gillian L. S. Hilton

Dealing with a Nightmare Situation – Teachers in English Schools and Trans/gender Distressed/gender Dysphoria Students

This paper discusses the responses of schools and teachers in England and some other developed countries to Trans children, that is, those who feel that their assigned sex at birth was not correct. These children may be defined as Trans, that is wanting to change their assigned sex, or in other ways, such as having gender distress or dysphoria, or not being cisnormative which is, accepting one's sex assigned at birth. Recent years have seen a steady increase in the numbers of school children concerned about their birth assigned sex, presenting numerous problems. These include areas such as toilet facilities, changing rooms, sports studied, clothing, names and the use of pronouns and how to allot sleeping accommodation on a school journey. Parents in many cases are very concerned over schools' reactions, which have included schools agreeing to allow social transitioning without informing parents, ignoring the safeguarding instructions to schools, that parents must be informed of physical or mental health issues a child discloses. In addition, parents and schools can be at odds, with how schools should respond. In England, teachers have been waiting for guidance from the DfE on this matter since 2018, but this was not produced for schools until the end of 2023 for consultation, leaving schools to make individual decisions on actions. Comparisons are made with how schools in other developed countries have responded to this challenge and a small group of teachers in England, were asked to express their personal views on this subject and how it had affected their role in school.

Keywords: schools, teachers, gender dysphoria/distress, Trans, cisnormative safeguarding, social transitioning

James Ogunleye

Controlling Student Number: the Challenges of Managing Exponential Growth of Students Seeking University Admissions in Nigeria – an update

Nigeria has seen a phenomenal growth in the number of students seeking admission into tertiary education in the last sixty years since the country's independence from the United Kingdom. The evidence of growth is much more pronounced among

students seeking admissions into publicly-funded universities than private universities. The situation got to a point particularly in the last ten years that less than half of 1.3 million average annual applicants secured university admissions. This empirical study examines the challenges that controlling, and the management of growth in the number of students seeking university admission present to the Nigerian regulatory authorities and universities. The methodological approach is based on the scoping review of literature, content analysis of policy documents, and the data collected from the regulatory authority, National University Commission, and the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB). The National University Commission among other things licenses, checks standards and quality in the Nigerian universities, while the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board is responsible for conducting matriculation examination for entry into tertiary institutions – universities, polytechnics and colleges of education. In terms of controlling the growth in students seeking university admission, the study finds that both the university admission regulators (JAMB) and individual institutions use ‘variable’ metric systems to reduce admissions. On the supply side, the study finds that, although licensing and promotion of private universities were significantly increased to boost enrolment capacity in the last twenty years, a significant proportion of students seeking university admissions still have a strong preference for public universities. The study, in conclusion, offers a set of recommendations about the reforms needed to address the challenges of students seeking admissions into the Nigerian higher education.

Keywords: higher education, university admission, National University Commission, JAMB, Nigeria

Johan Beckmann & Vimbi Petrus Mahlangu

Illuminating the Status of Non-racialism at South African Universities through Empirical Research and Personal Observations and Experiences [Roundtable]

The Roundtable contains an analysis of a research report by AfriForum Youth and some academics sharing their experiences and observations on non-racialism. What gave rise to the idea of a roundtable discussion of racialism at universities? After attending the BCES conference in Sofia in Bulgaria in 2023, some South African academics discussed their surprise at the number of papers on racialism / non-racialism in education read by participants from a significant number of countries. People in South Africa are used to the continual debate on racism in the country but they did not expect to learn about the apparent extent of the phenomenon in other countries. Shortly after South Africans returned to their country after the BCES conference, a predominantly white Afrikaans youth organisation Afriforum Youth (AFY) published a report on research conducted at all South African universities entitled “The status of non-racialism of South African universities”. The content of the report was such that a number of South African academics felt it would be appropriate to share its contents with an international audience. The Roundtable presentation at the XXII BCES Conference 2024 contains four parts: 1) Analysis of the research report by AfriForum Youth; 2) Foregrounding factors not dealt with in the report; 3) Sharing of personal experiences and observations; and 4) Conclusion.

Lina M. Methi

Psychological Capital of Resiliency for Students with Disabilities Post-Covid 19 Pandemic

Covid 19 pandemic has deeply exacerbated existing education and social inequities in higher education sectors. Students with disabilities from marginalised contexts were already facing significant barriers to participation in education and learning and experiencing challenges with online teaching and learning. Search on major scholars of inclusive education indicate that major inequalities in access to quality, inclusive education provision and the significant learning disparities across groups of students with disabilities remained a concern during and beyond the Covid 19 pandemic. However, students with educational needs and disabilities continue to suffer the most educational consequences, apart from the deprivation of their health essentials during the pandemic. This study explores the psychological capital dimension of resiliency for students with disabilities. Literature on resilience from the period 2019 to 2022 were reviewed with focus on protective and enabling strategies to enhance the resilience of students with disabilities post-Covid 19 pandemic. Findings revealed that Covid 19 situation induced concerns about inclusive and equitable quality education along with a limitation of support for students with disabilities. The study will contribute to improving the education systems that are more flexible, fully dedicated to students with disabilities learning through a range of learning modalities and technologies to be better equipped to face potential crises.

Keywords: psychological capital, resilience, marginalised contexts, inclusive education, enabling factors

Lorna M Dreyer & Annaly M Strauss

Affirming Inclusive Education at University: A Case of Two Sub-Sahara African Universities

This research aimed to investigate the experiences of students with learning disabilities (LD) at two universities in Sub-Sahara Africa. While universities are increasingly addressing the needs of students with sensory and physical disabilities, there is less emphasis on LD which does not present physically, thus often referred to as invisible or hidden disabilities. The research was, conducted as qualitative case studies, guided by Vygotsky's social cultural theory (SCT). A basic qualitative research methodology, embedded in an interpretive paradigm was used. Data was collected through an online background survey and semi-structured interviews. Thematic qualitative content analysis was used to analyse collected data systematically. From a social justice perspective, the major findings suggest that there are several factors that impede on equal education for students with LD at university. The research outcomes revealed that the hidden nature of LD becomes apparent as participants must self-declare their needs. They further experienced a lack of acknowledgement and support from lecturers. Most participants revert to valuing the support of family and friends more than that of lecturers. While both universities have policies and structures of support for students with LD, it is concluded that university

lecturers need to adopt an inclusive pedagogical stance by acknowledging the factors that affect the learning of students with LD. Recommendations from the findings include the need for professional development for lecturers and increased awareness of learning support services on campus. It is further concluded that university lecturers need to be reflective of their pedagogical practices to transform higher education learning spaces in pursuit of authentic inclusion.

Keywords: learning disabilities, inclusion, university lecturers, transformation, inclusive pedagogy, social cultural theory, learning support, policy

Louise Fullard, Charl Wolhuter, Aaron Nhlapo & Hennie Steyn

Exploring Programme Delivery in the Further Education and Training Phase of South African Secondary Schools amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic: Challenges, Mitigation Strategies and Transformative Approaches

This paper investigates the challenges, mitigation strategies and transformative approaches in educational programme delivery in South African education amidst the adverse influence of the pandemic in schools' Further Education and Training phase with a focus on the integration of technology-enhanced effective teaching and learning; using data obtained from interviews of a data-rich sample of the school management team and teachers of five schools. The noteworthy contribution of this paper to knowledge in the context of Comparative and International Education pertains to transformative strategies for technology-enhanced programme delivery in education. This paper's final objective is to link the explored findings of challenges, trends and innovations in the South African education system to the theme of this book focusing on the different worlds' common education challenges. Furthermore, the findings emphasised the need for innovation and transformation toward a technology-enhanced education environment, especially in the Fifth Industrial Revolution milieu. In addition, this paper presented noteworthy recommendations for educational stakeholders and future research.

Keywords: Fifth Industrial Revolution, Further Education and Training, influence of COVID-19 on education, Information and Communication Technology, programme delivery, quality education, technology-enhanced education, education transformation

Mabatho Sedibe

Career Opportunities for Diverse Women in South Africa with Special Reference to Aviation: Life Orientation Perspectives

The purpose of this study was to explore career opportunities for diverse women in South Africa with special reference to aviation. Little has been done on this focus due to its complexities and that after 20 years of South African democracy; female skill shortage in the aviation industry is still not addressed. The researcher utilized a qualitative approach. Mason (2002) argues that a qualitative approach is grounded in philosophy and is largely concerned about how the social world is interpreted and understood. Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological system theory is used in this study as a relevant theoretical framework. This study seeks to understand career opportunities

for diverse women in South Africa with special reference to aviation. The study also emphasizes the role of the subject Life Orientation in making people aware of career opportunities. Findings from this study showed that the relative lack of diverse women in the South African aviation sector is not an excuse because the South African government has given us opportunities to explore this field. On this note, it is recommended that more career awareness and bursaries be made available to the ideal candidates and that aviation industries should make piloting more attractive to women.

Keywords: diverse women, aviation, career opportunities, South Africa and Life Orientation

Matjhabedi Mazibuko & Nonhlanhla Maseko

Unveiling Student Identity: Understanding and Nurturing the Student of the 21st Century

In the 21st century, understanding the diverse identities of students is crucial for enabling and advancing their success in educational settings. This paper explores the importance of recognizing and embracing student identity as a fundamental aspect of effective education. It highlights the evolving nature of student demographics, emphasizing the need to move beyond traditional categorizations and stereotypes to truly understand the complexities of who our students are today. The multifaceted dimensions of student identity are explored, encompassing factors such as race, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic background, gender, sexuality, religion, ability, and more. It emphasizes that student identity is not static but fluid, acknowledging the intersections and interplay of various aspects within an individual's identity. Furthermore, the implications of student identity on educational practices, pedagogy, curriculum, and support systems are explored. This paper emphasizes the importance of creating inclusive learning environments that validate and celebrate students' diverse identities, fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment. It also discusses the role of cultural responsiveness and equity in addressing the unique needs and challenges faced by different student groups. Drawing on research and best practices, this paper highlights the benefits of adopting student-centered approaches that acknowledge and build upon the strengths, experiences, and perspectives students bring to the learning process. It emphasizes the significance of promoting inclusive dialogue, cultural exchange, and collaborative learning opportunities that encourage students to embrace their identities, respect others, and develop critical thinking skills. In conclusion, by recognizing and embracing student identity, institutions, and educators can create educational environments that cultivate all students' holistic development and success in the 21st century.

Keywords: student identity, 21st century, student, institutions, student support, intersectionality

Mpipo Zipporah Sedio

Investigating E-tutors Experiences of Facilitating a Module Through Learning Management System: A Case Study of Open Distance E-Learning Institution

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the facilitation experiences in a module by e-tutors through learning management system (LMS). Quantitative approach was followed in the study and a method used in data collection was a descriptive online survey. The paradigm used is interpretive in nature. The interpretation of the plan was through e-tutors who facilitated the support through LMS. The e-tutors were expected to respond to the following statements: (1) "I am able to use multimedia files to deliver course content"; (2) "I am able to deliver online tests for online students"; and (3) "I am able to maintain online students' satisfaction levels with synchronous teaching media". The sample consisted of 5 e-tutors facilitating a module offered in an online teaching mode. The sampling procedure was based on the following criteria, e.g., to take part in the study the participant must have a master's or doctoral qualification in the module being taught and one hundred students per each e-tutor for a course module. It was found that e-tutors lack the capacity to facilitate with LMS. It is recommended that e-tutors should be trained to be able to facilitate their teaching using LMS for different module courses.

Keywords: learning management system, e-tutoring, online students, multimedia files, online tests, satisfaction levels

Mubi Frieda Mavuso

Exploring the Experiences of Employees with Disabilities at an Open Learning Institution: Prospects for Support

This study explored the experiences of employees with disabilities at an open-distance institution in South Africa. A qualitative research approach and an interpretive phenomenological analysis design were used to understand perspectives of employees with disabilities. The study employed the social justice theory as a theoretical framework. Purposive sampling included fifteen participants from different colleges and regions within the institution. Also, both academics and support staff participated in the study. Data were collected through individual interviews using TEAMS and were thematically analysed to reveal the complex experiences of participants. The study showed diverse experiences of employees with disabilities within the institution. Specifically, it emerged that there are numerous employees with different disabilities in the institution. Employees experienced challenges ranging from personal experiences, negative attitudes, unsupportive work environment, inaccessible buildings, and incorrect implementation of institutional policy on accommodation of people with disabilities. Despite such challenges, employees used different strategies to cope and reported that they were supported by colleagues, health professionals and family members. Furthermore, most employees with disabilities showed resiliency in doing their work. The study concludes that exclusion is inevitable if institutional inclusive policies are not mediated appropriately. The study contributes to theory and practice on employees with disabilities at an open-distance institution of higher learning. Furthermore, it advocates for professional development of all on employees regarding people disabilities.

Keywords: employees with disabilities, open distance learning institutions, inclusion, social justice

Nikolaos Neveskiotis

Life Skills as an Integral Part of a Comprehensive Education: A Research Proposal for Educational Policies in Compulsory Education in Greece, Germany, and Finland

With individual, social, and emotional skills increasingly emerging as integral components of a comprehensive education, this scientific study aims to organize and summarize the range of different approaches found in the literature regarding the role and contribution of “life skills” to the holistic development of students and adolescents. This study serves as the theoretical background upon which extensive research will be based concerning educational policies and “life skills” in compulsory education in Europe, through a comparative analysis of three different European educational systems: Greece, Germany, and Finland.

Keywords: life skills, individual skills, emotional skills, social skills, compulsory education, Greece, Germany, Finland

Nikolay Popov & Vera Spasenović

Introducing a School Counselor Autonomy-Control Status (SCACS) Classification

This paper is a result of Nikolay Popov and Vera Spasenović’s ongoing efforts towards establishing a comparative research field called comparative school counseling studies, where comparative education methodological tools are used in researching school counseling worldwide. The purpose of the paper is to examine the relationship between the regulation of school-based counseling and the level of autonomy and control in the work of school counselors in nine European countries. This is a theoretical comparative school counseling study chiefly based on analysis of normative documents (laws, regulations, ordinances, instructions, and recommendations). The research methods used in the study are document analysis, comparative method, and generalization. The following nine countries are included in the study: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Ireland, Malta, the Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia, and the United Kingdom. The above-mentioned purpose of the paper is operationalized through: concisely presenting who the school counselor is; grouping the countries by the type of school system governance and the type of regulation of school counselors’ work; discussing autonomy and control in the work of school counselors; making brief descriptions of the school counselor’s functions in each country with short evaluations of the level of autonomy and control; and classifying school-based counseling functions according to their susceptibility to autonomy or control. As a final result of this study, Popov and Spasenović introduce a classification of school counselor autonomy-control status (SCACS). Presenting results of this first ever conceptual comparative study of autonomy and control in the work of school-based counselors in some European countries, the paper contributes to the further development of the field of comparative school counseling studies.

Keywords: school counselor, autonomy, control, school system, centralized school system governance, decentralized school system governance, comparative school counseling, school counselor autonomy-control status (SCACS)

Nkhensani Susan Thuketana

Using the Mean Length of Utterance Tool to Determine Young Learners' Educational Support Needs Post the COVID-19 Pandemic

Recent research in early childhood education points to learning difficulties caused by language acquisition disparities in young children who lost play opportunities during the COVID-19 lockdown period. Play enhances children's holistic development, including language and cognition, and is indispensable for young children's academic development. However, teachers in mainstream schools can lack the pedagogical competencies, to differentiate the curriculum according to children's developmental levels. This qualitative ethnographic study reports on the use of the Mean Length of Utterance (MLU) tool to determine children's whole-word production in their language development. 34 purposefully selected learners between five and six years old plus information from their parents was collected. Learners' observations, parents, and teachers' narratives were thematically analysed to define their experiences during the COVID-19 lockdown. Skinner's behaviorist theory underpinned the study. Four significant findings demonstrated an undisputed delayed language development in 26 of the 34 participating learners, resulting in teachers struggling with the suitable levels of language in Grade One Foundation Phase classrooms. The children had not acquired the appropriate language because of deprived opportunities to play and learn together in their early years. Finally, the findings confirmed the behaviorist theory stance that the children used adult language acquired during the national lockdown with their parents/caregivers. Subsequently, the study recommended that teachers employ the MLU to assess children's language development to pitch the teaching and learning content to their levels of understanding. Additionally, create language-rich environments and play opportunities to encourage their development and access to age-appropriate curricula.

Keywords: early childhood education, Mean Length of Utterance (MLU), language development

Nomthandazo Buthelezi & Nonhlanhla Desiree Maseko

Supporting the Transition of Learners with Learning Disabilities into a Special Class: An Informal Transition Support Training Model

The transition plan for learners with learning disabilities is a critical aspect that involves various key components. This paper focuses on the importance of transition planning in facilitating the successful integration of such learners into a special class, highlighting the benefits of family, school, and community partnerships. The plan establishes clear goals and objectives that align with the learner's aspirations and abilities, encompassing academic achievements, social integration, skill development, and career exploration. Moreover, the plan identifies specific strategies and

interventions to address potential barriers and challenges during the transition process. The paper draws on research conducted in a school situated in Johannesburg South and a longitudinal research program conducted at the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin. Utilizing the insights gained from these studies, the paper proposes an informal Transition Support Training model. This model emphasizes the assessment of learner strengths, challenges, and needs, allowing educators and support teams to construct an Individualized Education Transition Plan that optimally supports learners with learning disabilities throughout their transitional journey into a special class. By delivering the transition plan effectively, educators and support staff can facilitate a smooth transition for the learner's well-being and set the stage for their success in the new educational setting.

Keywords: transition, learners with learning disabilities, transition plan, special class

Nonhlanhla Desiree' Maseko & Themba Eric Motlounq

Challenges and Benefits of Transitioning to a Special Education Setting: The Phase of Adjustment

Transitioning into a special education setting represents a critical phase in the educational journey of students with diverse learning needs. This paper explores the multifaceted challenges and significant benefits associated with this critical adjustment period. It underscores the significance of a supportive and inclusive educational environment and its impact on the academic, social, and emotional development of students with special needs. Transitioning into a special education setting often comes with emotional challenges, as students may grapple with feelings of being “different” or “separate” from their peers. Coping with these emotions can be a challenging to individuals with diverse learning needs. Social stigmatization and stereotypes surrounding special education can lead to a sense of isolation and self-esteem issues among students, impacting their overall well-being. Transitioning into a special education setting, while accompanied by challenges, holds remarkable benefits for students with diverse learning needs. A supportive, inclusive, and personalized educational approach during this adjustment phase is essential to ensure that these students can reach their full potential academically, socially, and emotionally. The collective effort of educators, parents, and the community plays a crucial role in fostering an environment where every student can thrive.

Keywords: transition, challenges, diverse learning needs, special education

Obed Mfum-Mensah

Between “Scylla and Charybdis”? Trusteeship, Africa-China Relations, and Education Policy and Practice

Sub-Saharan African societies had contacts with China that stretch back to the early days of the Silk Road where the two regions facilitated trade relations and exchanged technology and ideas. Beginning in the 1950s China formalized relations with SSA based on South-South cooperation. At the end of the Cold War, China intensified its

relations with SSA within the frameworks of “One Belt one Road” in Africa and the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). The China-Africa relations have scored benefits in the areas of promoting infrastructural development, strong investments in SSA, trade links between the two regions, less expensive technical assistance for nations in SSA, cultural exchanges, and student scholarships. Nonetheless, the relations raise complicated issues around trade where China is flooding markets in SSA with inferior goods, acquisition of resources, Chinese mining companies causing environmental destruction in many countries in SSA, and the Chinese government’s debt trapping of many sub-Saharan African nations. Many suspect that China is surreptitiously forging a relationship with SSA that may help it assert its “trusteeship” over sub-Saharan Africa’s political, economic, and development processes. The paper is developed within these broader contexts to examine the paradoxes and contradictions of the China-sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) relations and their potential impacts on education policy and practice in the region. The paper focuses on SSA, a region that constitutes forty-eight of the fifty-four countries of the African continent. This sociohistorical paper is part of my ongoing study to examine the impacts of external forces’ economic and political relations on education policy and practice in the SSA and the potential of the relations to destabilize the epistemological processes of sub-Saharan African societies.

Keywords: education policy, sub-Saharan Africa, China-Africa relations, education and development, human capital, human rights and education

Ricardo Lozano

Educational Leadership Matters: Educational Leadership Preparation Matters Too

There is a growing understanding that, after engaging teaching, educational leadership is the second most important factor accounting for student success. Despite this fundamental declaration, educational leadership has fallen through the cracks. Little interest has developed concerning in-depth studies of this important position in education. Educational leaders carry the unique responsibility to unify the many independent variables at play in schools, and create an atmosphere in which the synergy produced delivers results far beyond academic achievement. As such, educational leadership preparation programs carry the enormous responsibility to address the fundamental difference between an effective school manager and an effective leader.

Keywords: educational leadership, leadership preparation programs

Richie Rizkala Elian

The Lecture Course: An Obsolete and Ineffective Approach?

Today, in some developed countries such as France and the United Arab Emirates, teachers are asked to become more passive in the classroom, letting the children be more active, at the center of the teaching methods, encouraging them to discover the

course on their own. In this educational practice, teachers can be compared to theater directors and children to actors. The traditional lecture approach is becoming increasingly unpopular and sometimes even banned. In fact, the traditional position of a teacher, transmitting his knowledge to the children, by writing on the blackboard and asking them to take notes or speaking in front of them is being increasingly criticized. As a high school teacher of Science and mainly Mathematics, this issue is of particular interest to me. Therefore, I decided to tackle this subject, first, by searching for the origin of this debate and then by analyzing and weighing the two opposite pedagogical practices, in my courses, based on my teaching experience in diverse francophone schools in Lebanon, France, Romania, Serbia and the United Arab Emirates; countries whose culture and expectations are not exactly the same, even if the base curriculum of the mentioned schools is French.

Keywords: classical methods, comparative studies, educational practices, international education, lectures, modern methods, Mathematics, Science

Richie Rizkala Elian & Renee Lupu Gorduza

The Use of Technology in Teaching: A Perspective from Both Teachers and Students

Nowadays, technology is increasingly integrated into our lives and daily activities, including in school education. From the perspective of both a student and a teacher, we have experienced this change within the French education system. In fact, we can realize that a wide range of technological tools is used for educational purposes. This is why we decided to examine the effects of the use of technology from two distinct angles in secondary school: the teacher's one and the student's one. What interested both teacher and student was to what extent, the use of technology is essential to our work. Firstly, the abstract details the use of technology in our work. Then follows, our observations on the effects of abstaining as much as possible from using technology for teaching or learning or educational purposes, for a full week. These results are then compared and analyzed against our usual practice. The paper also explores our normal approach to technology and its use and in addition where it was possible to employ other methods, not technology to achieve our objectives. This research, based on the French educational system, in private schools, abroad, focuses on the common challenges that teachers and students encounter when they have to use technology in an effective, useful and balanced way.

Keywords: experiment, student, teacher, technological challenge, technology in education

Saltiel Khololo Collen Mataboge

Examining the Influence of Covid -19 Pandemic on Efficacy of Participative Management in Primary Schools

The purpose of the article sought to examine the influence of Covid-19 on the efficacy of participative management in primary schools. The main question that the article sought to understand is: "To what extent does Covid-19 influence the efficacy of

participative management in primary schools?” The thesis in this article is that the lack of alternative measures to engage students and teachers in educational activities during the lockdown period posed challenges to effective participative management. The approach that was used was qualitative in nature. Literature review was used as a method of collecting information. The paradigm that was followed is interpretive and the analysis was based on the interpretation of the findings of other scholars’ studies. It was found that the fear of the unknown caused by the widespread of the virus and the mortality tendencies led to teachers’ attritions and students’ withdrawals and dropouts from schools. This led to school administrators experiencing difficulties to get the teachers and students back to school to continue with an effective culture of teaching and learning because of long-term school closure due to the pandemic. Teachers and school administrators were placed under ubiquitous pressure with an expectation to devise measures that could alleviate fatigue and minimize student distractions in their learning.

Keywords: administration, lockdown, communication, curricular implementation, teachers, pandemic

Saroj Pandey

Reimagining and Rejuvenating Teacher Education for Equitable Inclusive and Cohesive Society

This paper deals with a crucial theme that has implication for the future of education and society. The world today is sitting on the edge of the volcano of violence, discrimination, aggression and oppression that erupts every now and then destabilizing the peace, and harmony of nations and the world. Violence and aggression in its multifaceted forms is manifested by individuals, societies, and nations against others. The new age biological warfare is threatening the very survival of human race and we are still reeling under the shock given by Corona Virus that has brought the whole world on its knees and even the most developed countries were helplessly staring at the unknown future. Have we learnt any lesson from these catastrophes? Education which was thought to be the major instrument to inculcate values, tolerance, harmony and living together in our children has failed miserably in its aim. The problem of today’s education is its alienation from the realities of the world around with the result that instead of being a process of liberation, it is often visualized as an instrument of oppression, manipulation, process of thought control and indoctrination. These problems are being universally felt in various degrees by nations across the world -developed or developing. The insistence of Delors report (1996) on “Learning to live together” as the central pillar of education is a sad reminder of the current state of affairs, and also a realization that education must be geared to promote a culture of peace, tolerance, democratic values, human rights and duties, as well as global citizenship among students. Education needs to be more humane and liberating. It is right time to evolve a system of education that is more humane and liberating for both students and teachers. In fact, the teacher is the major source of inculcating the values of tolerance, peace, empathy and sympathy etc amongst the student. But the crucial question is are our teachers themselves well equipped with the knowledge, skills,

pedagogies and dispositions to overcome their own personal biases and prejudices to prepare students for a peaceful and non-violent global society? What should be the core components that cut across the national boundaries which should be included in the teacher education curriculum and teacher training pedagogies to ensure a more tolerant and peaceful world? These are some of the questions that have been addressed in this paper. It is suggested that teacher education curriculum should equip teachers to identify and address symptoms of religious intolerance, fanaticism and violence among students. There is also need to include various conflict resolution techniques, and strategies to identify and deal with one's own personal prejudices and biases against different race, caste, religion etc. Therefore, a more reflective and humane teacher education programme is the need of hour that may facilitate in developing an inclusive society for global citizens.

Keywords: teacher education curriculum, violence, tolerance, cohesive society, global citizenship

Seshoka Joseph Rapeta

Exploring the Effects of Teacher Mobility on Learners' Rights to Basic Education

This study aims to explore the effects of teacher mobility on learners' right to basic education in the redeployment of teachers. The qualitative research design employed in this study serves as a comprehensive framework to scrutinise the diverse ramifications, encompassing academic, social, and emotional dimensions, experienced by learners during teachers' transition between schools. This study employs qualitative methodology such as interviews and document analysis to unravel the intricate interplay between teacher mobility and the preservation or potential infringement of learners' rights within the educational landscape. The results showed that educators who are declared "additional" no longer prioritise their teaching responsibilities and miss their classes. The most effective teachers are often lost as a result of rationalisation and redeployment. The governing body of a public school is required to promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school. It is recommended that the best interest of the child be considered when releasing or absorbing additional teachers in schools.

Keywords: basic education, exploring the effects, learners' rights, redeployment cases, teacher mobility

Tebogo Jillian Mampane

The Induction and Mentorship of New Practitioners in Early Childhood Education Centres: The South African Context

The purpose of this paper is to emphasise the value of inducting and mentoring new practitioners in Early Childhood Education centres. Early Childhood Education centres are usually located in meaningful buildings. Centres care for more children

than the family can provide for. They are usually divided into groups or classrooms of similarly aged children. Child care centres typically have many practitioners who are overseen by a centre manager or a director. Induction and mentoring are components of professional development aimed at enhancing the educational support system for all ECEC practitioners, particularly those who have recently been hired. Because centre managers are responsible for the growth and performance of their children, they should equip practitioners with support measures to help them improve child development and performance. Because most mothers work full-time, usually out of financial necessity, they require regular child care. For these mothers the question is not whether to use day-care, but how to choose among the available options in a way that is best for the child. Quality child care is more beneficial to children than staying at home. As a result, the purpose of this study is to look at conceptual frameworks as well as new approaches of educating and supporting practitioners to facilitate ECE learning excellence. More experienced personnel (mentors) should provide induction and mentorship, guidance, advice, and information to practitioners for career growth and enhanced performance. Findings reveal that induction and mentorship are important to pass along information, skills, and competence to practitioners who may not have had official training in these areas. Based on the appropriateness or inadequacy of the design of practitioner induction and mentoring programs, more study on the influence of induction on performance and practitioner turnover may be conducted (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Transformation and practitioner retention should be the goals of induction and mentorship.

Keywords: induction, mentoring, beginner practitioners, professional development, ECE centres, transformation

Tebogo Jillian Mampane & Sharon Thabo Mampane

Mentoring Higher Education Leaders and Managers through Contextual Intelligence

This study investigated the mentoring of academics for leadership and management in higher education institutions through the application of contextual intelligence. Experts and professionals generally agree that effective institutional leadership and management mentorship, using contextual knowledge, is crucial for achieving institutional success. The paper aims to illustrate the significance of mentoring institutional leaders and managers using contextual intelligence skills. The dearth of literature on mentoring academics using contextual intelligence in South Africa might be addressed through mentoring, as this practice poses a significant obstacle. The challenges of applying contextual intelligence in mentoring academics are highlighted with a focus on four key areas: mentoring, leadership and management, contextual intelligence, and achieving organisational success. Despite their relatively tiny proportion within the overall framework, these elements exert influence over all aspects of the institution's activities. While tackling each impact individually may result in success, the continuous emergence of new factors makes it unlikely for this method to maintain improvement. The findings illustrate that the perception of

improvement is determined by a dynamic and intricate setting. The paper plays a vital role in considering contextual dynamics when mentoring for contextual intelligence.

Keywords: mentoring, contextual intelligence, leadership, management, institutional success

Vimbi Petrus Mahlangu

Exploring Experiences of Prisoners Regarding Studying in Incarceration in a Distance Mode

The purpose of the study was to examine the perspectives of convicts regarding distance learning while incarcerated. The paper's central claim is that, despite their severe living conditions, inmates who are committed to their education cannot have their education impeded by prison walls. This research was carried out in a prison in Namibia. This study was qualitative in nature, utilizing interviews as a means of data collecting while adhering to an interpretive paradigm. A skilled transcriber transcribed the tape-recorded interviews verbatim, and the author was provided the notes to interpret. The analysis was conducted thematically. With relation to prison services, Namibia's legal system saw significant transformations as it moved from an approach centered on punishment and isolation to one that emphasizes corrections and community reintegration. The government of the Republic of Namibia has demonstrated a strong commitment to the rehabilitation of inmates by permitting them to enroll in distance education programs via e-learning, according to the findings. According to some inmates, prison offers them greater opportunities to improve their lives. Prisoners can find it extremely difficult to study while incarcerated, particularly if they are doing so remotely. The things they desire, the help they occasionally receive, and their inability to take the easy route imply that occasionally the jail administration may refuse to give in and suggest an alternative. Sometimes they would claim that there are no members, which implies that for them to visit, they will have to work out a deal with the organization in order to use the facilities for learning.

Keywords: prison, rehabilitation, e-learning, integration, inmate, distance education, virtual learning