Volume 26, Issue 2, 2021

Introduction to articles in this issue
David Taufui Mikato Fa'avae & Kerry Earl Rinehart

Editors: Kerry Earl & David Taufui Mikato Fa'ava

Introduction to articles in this issue

David Taufui Mikato Fa'avae & Kerry Earl Rinehart
The University of Waikato
New Zealand

Researchers are involved in posing and seeking answers to pertinent and important questions for growing our understanding of our world and its inhabitants, and positive change. Research projects are a journey involving curiosity, consultation, reading, attention, planning, engagement with individuals, groups and communities, deliberation, organisation, recording, presentation and action. Research also involves personal change. As Batchelor and Di Napoli wrote, "researchers-as-voyagers are engaged in a process of becoming, and of discovering a voice" (2006, p. 13). Articles in this issue come from research journeys of various lengths, collaborative contributions we anticipate will be stimulating and informative.

Capitalising on Māori concepts lead to deeper understanding of the ways in which Māori practise being, knowing, seeing and doing Māori in society. Enhancing mana through kaitiakitanga is an important responsibility and provides a deeply meaningful way to understand Māori notions of wellbeing and living well. The article by Lesley Rameka, Brenda Eva Soutar, Vanessa Anne Paki, Leanne Clayton, *Taunaki puna reo: Kaiako considerations of mana and kaitiakitanga* provides findings from a TLRI funded project titled, *Te whakapūmautia te mana: Enhancing mana through kaitiakitanga* (2020–2021), and outlines implications for early childhood education (ECE). Opportunities for mokopuna (children) to recognise and attain mana (power, authority) as kaitiaki (guardians) of themselves and their environment contributes to a collective sense of wellbeing. These are understood from the kaiako (teachers') perspectives of mana and kaitiakitanga, as reflected in the Māori medium ECE services.

Almost every day you can read headlines in mainstream news concerning financial stress and insecurity, housing unaffordability, levels of debt, results of surveys of financial literacy, requests for financial aid through GoFundMe pages, and so on. YouTube and other social media are packed with get out of debt advice. Sorted provides tools and guides as "a free service by Te Ara Ahunga Ora Retirement Commission, the government-funded, independent agency dedicated to helping New Zealanders get ahead financially" (https://sorted.org.nz/about-us). Even banks are in on the act as part of their engagement with customers and loyalty agendas. It is apparent that some people's financial ideas and choices are changing due to revision of personal values and priorities, changes in employment, and societal and environmental crises.

At different times financial education programmes in schools do receive media attention. We are delighted to publish an article examining financial education. Jack Goldingham Newsom is a talented young journalist and writer who was contracted to write Financial Education Hot Topics by Young Enterprise (see http://youngenterprise.org.nz/find-resources/hot-topic-1-budgeting/). A key point Goldingham Newsom makes in his article *Financial education is in need of a shake-up* is that purchasing

decisions are situated within cultural, social and ecological considerations. He aims to stimulate discussion and revision of pedagogy to develop long-term financial capability and wellbeing through proposing some avenues for improvement of financial education programmes, providing concrete examples and raising questions for research. WJE invites manuscripts from others in response or on related questions and topics of young people's financial literacy.

It is perhaps surprising given the geography of this country that there is not more research focused on rural education being published in New Zealand. Victoria Beckwith's article *Parents' perceptions of global citizenship education in rural Aotearoa New Zealand* reports on a small qualitative instrumental case study. Semi-structured interviews with three parents of children in Year 5 in a rural Aotearoa New Zealand school context provide the evidence. Beckwith's focus is not on rurality but on global citizenship education (GCED), and she points out:

> There are no references to GCED in the New Zealand curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) and there is no consensus on how it is taught (Grimwood, 2018). However, in the secondary sector, global citizenship implicitly underlies one of the Level 7 Social Studies achievement objectives: Understand how communities and nations meet their responsibilities and exercise their rights in local, national, and global contexts. (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 61) (cited in Beckwith, this issue, p. 39)

Beckworth presents how she operationalises the term global citizenship education and makes useful links to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Investigating and describing parental views contrasts with the majority of research in this area which is based on teachers' or students' perspectives. Although a small study, the detail supports understanding of these parents' points of view, and connection to research in other contexts (such as Norway and Israel) provides plenty for school leaders and teachers to consider as well as grounds for further research.

Literature reviews represent a moment of pause, to review and collate information on what research has been undertaken, when, and using what theory and methods. Sashi Sharma, Shweta Sharma (The University of Waikato, Hamilton), Phil Doyle, Louis Marcelo and Daniel Kumar (De La Salle College, Auckland) undertook a review of literature to identify games for the teaching and learning of probability at the school level. These authors provide a systematic review of research related to *Teaching and learning probability using games* collating key research (2010–2020) into an illustrated collection of games categories and specific games, including cultural games. It is noted that "none of the studies reviewed in this paper were conducted in New Zealand classrooms". These authors aim to support the development of students' probabilistic thinking in the classroom and generate more interest in using games, particularly cultural games, in statistics education. The descriptions of specific games will be helpful for teachers and, as a literature review, it will also be useful to postgraduate student researchers.

Moderation is a quality assurance process designed to measure fairness, equity, consistency and compliance, to name a few. The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) is tasked with ensuring quality assurance is conducted and reflects the metrics of 'quality' aligned to standards that have been set nationally. *The functions of NZQA moderation* by Anna Williams, Michael B. Johnston, and Robin Averill, addresses how policies are enacted by organisations and how sometimes enactment can diverge from intent. The perspectives of the people involved in the policy work within organisations are outlined in the mixed methods study. Data from a sample of 215 academic leaders across three organisation types were collected via online surveying. The authors note, leaders perceive NZQA moderation to function in the areas of assessment quality, professional learning opportunities, organisational quality assurance and maintaining public confidence. Leaders from different organisation types mostly shared similar views in terms of the functions; however, those from private training enterprises considered NZQA moderation to place stronger emphasis on organisational quality assurance and to hold broader improvement functions than those from other organisations. Overall, the findings provide useful knowledge to inform the policy work of education organisations and for NZQA itself.

The education philosopher Gert Biesta (2013) raises the concern that education always involves risk and if we took "the risk out of education, there is a real chance that we take out education altogether" (p. 1). However, when school-based decisions risk a young person's education there is also a high level of responsibility. Peter J. O. Aloka's paper, *Risky versus cautious group decisions: An explorative study of Kenyan school disciplinary panels*, is an exploration of risky and cautious group decision-making among teacher-members within disciplinary panels in Kenyan schools. Students' behaviour within schools reflect the wider societal challenges in Kenya. The risks of enacting negative practices by teachers that deal with just behaviour itself can result in students being removed from schools and placing them in society which only shifts the problem. Employing qualitative semi-structured interviews with 14 teachers across three secondary schools, he proposed the persuasive argumentation factors such as new information, credible information, perceived expertise source, age, teaching experience and seniority shape how panel members shift decisions from pre-group risky decisions to post-group cautious decisions. Aloka recommends for school principals to include members of the school community as part of any disciplinary panels within schooling.

Research studies and its capacity to influence and shape policy is valued highly in developed nations. However, the implementation of policy in developing nations is often challenging for local people and contexts. The article, *Applying a 'contexts of influence' policy analysis model to civics education in Nepal*, unpacks the 'Contexts of Influence' policy analysis framework applied to Nepal. The research study focused on a policy into practice analysis of civics and citizenship educational curriculum goals. Key themes around teaching and learning related to national identity, democracy, cultural diversity and global education were explored at the macro, meso and micro policy levels. The study identified gaps and tensions in policy making in Nepal within and between the contexts of influence, text production and practice. In terms of findings, the relationships between the various contexts of influence in Nepal are not quite as dynamic as in some other studies that have applied the policy cycle model. Based on the implications of the research, the study suggests both textbooks and teaching practice might benefit from a greater sense of agency and empowerment in order to stimulate more creative and multi-perspectival classroom practice.

The article *Negotiating understandings of teaching dispositions within an early childhood initial teacher education community of practice* is timely, given the current review of ITE programmes by the Teaching Council New Zealand and existing work on the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) refresh. For the authors, Alison Warren, Lesley Robinson, Sandra Tuhakaraina, and Tracy Dayman, teaching dispositions as opposed to right-thinking abilities within ECE and ITE is a key phenomenon that needs further unpacking. They suggest the work on dispositions in teacher education in Aotearoa New Zealand has not been well defined or systematic. Utilising the community of practice and community of learning methodology, discussion data from a group of teacher educators and a cohort of student teachers in the field were collected, analysed and presented as summary notes and mind maps. In terms of educational implications, the community of practice methodology provided a useful frame to understand teaching, learning and assessment processes as complex negotiations linked to teaching dispositions.

WJE is publishing an increasing amount of research based in higher education contexts. Student experience is a subject of attention for university administrators and researchers. Gamze Kasalak, in his article *Does the amount of university choice decision matter for engagement and student alienation?*, presents research on university choice, student alienation and school engagement (emotional, behavioural and cognitive). Participants in this correlational design research were 609 first-year college students attending different programmes within the Faculty of Education and Faculty of Communication of a public university in Turkey (2019–2020). Unlike New Zealand, in Turkey, students need to complete the Student Selection Examination (SSE), sometimes, we are told, taking this exam multiple times until achieving access to the programme they wish to enrol in.

Kasalak found many recognisable factors in students' university choice, such as having knowledge of the university, financial support provided by the university, and cost. Interestingly, student

engagement was a factor; however, alienation was not. Administrators and lecturers in higher education are advised to "take the necessary measures to anticipate and recognise student alienation" (p. 144). Read Kasalak's article for further details.

The educational challenges facing school systems in Oceania are diverse. For small island developing nations like Samoa, upgrading teachers' qualifications is a move to not only upskill teachers but improve the quality of classroom practice that are meaningful to students within the local context. The article *A second chance in education: upgrade teachers' perceptions of tertiary education in Samoa* utilises a methodology that resonates with Samoan peoples' understanding of engagement and education. Indigenous Pacific practices like talanoa (dialogic practice) and nofo (being present, appreciating presence) helped capture the perceptions and lived experiences of teachers enrolled in the teacher upgrade programme, ministry officials and school leaders. Through sharing the challenges experienced by the participants, the authors, Tagataese Tupu Tuia, Epenesa Esera, and David Taufui Mikato Fa'avae, highlight the nuanced meanings associated with becoming a professional within formal schooling in a context where professionalism and the socio-cultural responsibilities within the community are interdependent and collectively influenced.

Reference

Batchelor, D., & Di Napoli, R. (2006). The doctoral journey: Perspectives. *Educate, 6*(1), 13–24. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/74394073.pdf
Biesta, G. J. J. (2013). *The beautiful risk of education.* Routledge.