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Abstracts

Pilar Aguilera
Arts and Humanities

Which factors influence best practice on the implementation of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL)? A qualitative study of four primary schools of Southampton

The present paper discusses the results obtained from a research study conducted during the period 2006-2007 for a MA (Ed) in Institutional Management and Leadership for professional development at the University of Southampton. The aim of the study was to identify the factors that influence best practice on the implementation of the Primary SEAL, and explore how these factors interact to facilitate best practice for long term sustainability.

Grounded on the theory about the factors that best support school-based SEL programming and its implementation, a change model based on three interactive dimensions, namely the characteristics of the change, the internal conditions of the school, and the pressure and support systems, was adapted. The model aimed to explore the perceptions of teachers, SEAL coordinators and head teachers of four primary schools with expertise and several years of experience on SEAL delivery and implementation through the Primary Behaviour and Attendance Pilot.

According to this study, three interactive factors were identified to influence best practice implementation:

1) a positive environment across a whole-school approach;

2) the commitment and support of the head teacher and the Senior Leadership Team in fostering the conditions for best practice by building whole school capacity; and

3) organisational support as a tension between two forces interacting within and outside schools: the support of schools as committed learning communities, and the LEA involvement in providing training opportunities and networks systems and partnerships across SEAL schools.

These factors might impact children's social and emotional skills. My current research now builds on these three interactive factors through the emotional dimension of Citizenship Education as a means to promote social justice and human rights.

Hasan Akyuzlu
Geography, Enterprise, Mathematics and Sciences

Is the Nature of Risk Objective or Subjective?

The aim of this short oral presentation is to discuss whether risk is subjective or objective or a combination of both. The literature is not clear about the subjectivity and objectivity of the nature of risk. Risk is an important socio-scientific concept in everyday life. In my PhD project, I aim to provide a microworld and explore tools, to help students, consider risk as an objective. Having done so, my microworld will contribute and reduce students' misunderstanding on risk.

The distinction between objective and subjective in philosophy normally refers to judgements and claims which people make. Objective judgements and claims are assumed to be free from personal considerations, emotional perspectives, etc. Subjective judgements and claims, however, are assumed to be heavily (if not entirely) influenced by such personal considerations. Thus, the statement 'the height of the London Eye is 135m' is considered to be objective because such precise measurement is presumed to be uninfluenced by personal preferences. Moreover the accuracy of such information can be checked and confirmed by experts. However, the statement 'I like vanilla ice-cream' is an entirely subjective judgment because it can be informed solely by personal preferences. In this sense, objective is culturally agreed, however subjective is individually determined.

Campbell (2006) has argued that the need to combine impact and likelihood to assess risk is objective. The detail of this combination depends upon people's preferences. According to Campbell, culturally we could decide that there is distinct dimension of risk which is impact times likelihood. On the other hand, judgements of the size of impact and likelihood are matters of subjective argument.

Thus, the core idea of risk analysis literature which is an agreed idea is that impact and likelihood of occurrence have to be coordinated into a single measure of risk in some way which can be objective. On the other hand, there is no agreement about how to do this coordination at the moment. In that sense individuals assessing risk are doing so subjectively. I will explain this debate and details during my presentation.

Lubabatu Ammani
Learning, Curriculum and Communication

The development of a qualitative approach and the researcher as a research tool

The research is a qualitative feminist study, set out to explore access of women to higher education in Nigeria. Using social constructionist perspective to examine how through social discourse and social relationships women themselves and the community construct beliefs, values and practices in relation to women access to higher education in Nigeria.

The study was carried out in Nigeria, Using two sample Universities across the former regions of the nation, the North and the South. My pilot study informed my use of semi structured interviews to gather data from forty participants involving university academic and non academic staff and students. Documentary analysis that involved, government statistical records, memos, and newsletters were also carried out.

I moved from a quantitative to qualitative approach in my final data collection in line with my experience in my pilot project. As a feminist researcher I believe I should a face to face contact with my respondents and be the tool for my research work. The researcher as a tool influence many aspect of my research, including access to in-depth feelings, experiences and reflexivity.

In this presentation, I will illustrate how my position as a woman researcher influenced the data I was able to collect from both female and male interview participants. Based on this I will suggest the importance of understanding the researcher as research tool in feminist research.

Penny Ashby
Early Childhood and Primary Education

Can life history methodology be a useful tool to explore changes in professional identity as education professionals move into new roles?

Two Reading Recovery Teacher Leaders in training were interviewed using a life history approach. A professional life history time line was prepared by each informant and used as a tool to structure the interview. Informants were asked to identify three significant transitions during their professional lives and probe questions were used to explore the factors influencing these transitions.

Wenger's theory of 'Identity in Practice' (1998) provided a framework for this study; in particular his notions of identity as community membership and identity as learning trajectory.

Interviews were transcribed and analysed using NVIVO software and patterns of coding suggested indicators of change in professional identity. In particular, both teachers could be identified as making a transition into a 'senior teacher' role within their school context. A model will be presented outlining both indicators of identity transformation and factors influencing such transformation.

This pilot study identified that life history methodology is strongly retrospective in nature and does not provide evidence of current identity transformation. A possible solution to this problem is to use methods aligned with 'Anticipatory Reflection', as suggested by Conway (2001).

Mike Aylen
Early Childhood and Primary Education

Effective *primary school Teaching Assistants?* Teaching Assistants in the Primary School: what makes them effective para-educators?

This research has been inspired by recent reforms to the education workforce (DfES 2002b:2; DfES 2003), the ongoing development of the skills strategy in schools (TDA 2006) and the new levels of responsibilities for Higher Level Teaching Assistants (TDA 2007). The increasing number of Teaching Assistants (TAs) being employed, and the apparent dependency of schools on them, have made the research question of what makes TAs effective para-educators particularly important and timely.

The study explores whether the government's recognition of Teaching Assistants' role as paraprofessionals or 'para-educators' has impacted on primary school organisation and whether TAs' work is supporting children's learning (Thomas 1989; Moyles and Suschitzky 1997; Lee 2002; Quick 2003; Smith, Whitby *et al*, 2004).

This study is both exploratory, due to the paucity of UK research in this area, and descriptive, in the type of data being collected. The literature has generated a number of subsidiary questions which can be grouped at three levels:

    a) how are TAs managed and supported, according to the senior management team?
    b) what is TAs' perception of their role and how they are supported by the school?
    c) how effective are TAs in working with groups of children in key stage one?

The third level (c) may help provide some evidence on whether TAs do influence children's learning and whether the support found in levels (a) and (b) may contribute to this.

Six primary schools deemed, at least, to be 'satisfactory' as judged by OfSTED were chosen from four local authority areas in order to allow for a range of schools working in differing contexts to be investigated together with the management strategies in the schools' deployment of TAs.

The data collection is currently under way and the data analysis has not yet begun.

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Desmond Bermingham
Education and International Development

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The interaction between global and local education policy processes. A comparative case study of the Education for All Fast Track Initiative (FTI) in Rwanda and Ethiopia

The Education for All Fast Track Initiative (FTI) is a major global programme launched in 2002 to help low income countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goal target of providing Universal Primary Education by 2015. The FTI currently has commitments of over $1.5 billion from 15 donors to support education programmes in 37 countries, mostly in Africa. The FTI is widely regarded as an important attempt to apply the principles of Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (OECD DAC 2005) in the education sector.

The research project will examine the interaction between this important global initiative and the local education sector planning process in two country case studies: Ethiopia and Rwanda. The research will investigate whether the FTI supported or undermined the local planning processes as well as the extent to which the local stakeholders were successful in what Jenny Ozga calls 'talking back in the vernacular' (Ozga and Lingard, 2007) to shape the global dialogue. The research will draw on existing documentary analysis of the national education sector planning process as well as primary data collected from interviews with leading local actors. It is hoped that the project will make a small contribution to the research gap identified by Angela Little on the impact of global education movements at the local level. (Little 2008)

References:

Little, A. (2008). EFA Politics, Policies and Progress. London: IoE.

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Val Bernard
Educational Foundations and Policy Studies

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Single and positively ambivalent

The positioning of single women across societies has been for the most part characterised by marginalisation. Interestingly the stereotype of the virgin or whore still resonates in

popular depictions. There is also the sense in which they are to be pitied for failing to attract and secure male attention and commitment. Recent attempts to challenge such stereotypes aim to present single women as positively and productively single. This struggle is evident in literature that describes the single state as positive but almost always as an apologetic. The single women, in other words has to justify her singleness. It is the justification that often situates the single status as positive and ambivalent.

Christianity has a legacy of grappling with the increasing presence of single women. Here too they are pushed to the margins. It is the focus on her as a resource for ministry where she arises as productively single. This contributes to the painting of an ambivalent picture where she is on the margins but also useful.

The black single woman in general is no different. Secular accounts sometimes blame her for the ills within the black community despite a legacy of celebrating her victories. Her contributions emerge against a backdrop of failure; positive ambivalence. Perceptions of Black women within faith based communities are not too dissimilar.

This presentation will explore the ways in which black women within the Seventh Day Adventist community describe their marginality. To what extent can they too come under the umbrella of positively ambivalence and if so what are the particular features of that description. These questions will be briefly considered within the context of an African centric approach.

David Buglar
Social Science Research Unit

Involving lay people in research: an evaluation

Consumer involvement in funding decisions for research programmes is becoming more widespread in the voluntary sector and it is an explicit policy of the NHS research and development programme; however, there is little research into the benefits or impacts of involvement.

The term consumer/user is has a range of interpretations. Concepts such as 'lay', 'public' and 'community' may seem clear, but their meanings are, in fact, elusive (DeMaio, 1993). Consumers have been defined variously as: 'Those without professional expertise on an abstract body of knowledge that can be applied in the health care field' (Friedson, 1970); and 'People whose primary interest in health-care is their own health or those of their family, as past, current and potential patients…' (Oliver *et al*, 2001).

The Alzheimer's Society funds research with the help of consumers, which it defines as: people with dementia, and their (non-professional) carers or former carers. The Alzheimer's Society has run its Quality Research in Dementia Consumer Network since 2001. Its network of consumers is considered an example of best practice in the field, yet it has not been evaluated formally until now. The presenter is therefore undertaking an evaluation, acting as an insider researcher.

The presenter will outline the evaluation project, detailing the research questions and methods, highlighting some emerging findings in light of some of the main arguments for and against involvement. He will also raise some of the main ethical considerations.

Ingrid Butterley
Psychology and Human Development

Reading and motivation: perspectives from bilingual students and their parents/carers

Personal motivation and supportive home environments are key elements in the development of successful and effective primary aged readers in school. Bilingual students can experience cultural differences, in relation to the purpose and significance of reading, between home and school. This in turn can affect motivation. Their parents/carers may find it difficult to provide support for reading at home because of their own experiences of learning to read in culturally diverse situations and in languages other than English. This small-scale ethnographic study is set in three primary schools in one inner London borough. This study seeks to elicit some of the personal memories of a group of primary aged students of learning to read in English as well as their current reading interests and levels of motivation.

Their class teachers also tell their own stories. Equally, there is a consideration of how the parents/carers of this group of students offer reading support at home. Individual interviews, focus group interviews, field notes and a research journal inform the self-reflexive research story, which is situated within a socio-cultural analysis of reading and reading pedagogy. The findings suggest that bilingual students are often motivated and successful readers who effectively integrate different cultural purposes within their reading. Equally, their parents/carers have a rich history of experiences which they use to support their children.

These findings will inform the educational dialogue around the inclusion of linguistic minority parents/carers and their children within the primary school reading curriculum.

Helen Charman
Arts and Humanities

Learning at the Core: an exploration of the characteristics of the contemporary museum as a learning organisation.

Using a mixed method design of case study and practitioner enquiry focused on the Design Museum, London, my research explores and develops the concept of the contemporary museum as an 'integrated learning organisation'. The implications of this concept for prevailing professional practices and organisational structures within established western ontologies of the museum are concomitantly examined, and a proposal made for a model of the contemporary museum as an integrated learning organisation.

Valerie Coultas
Learning, Language and Communication

Teacher attitudes to talk

I believe that talk based lessons can build trust among pupils. Therefore, I am especially interested in finding out how teachers view talk in the classroom. Through an empirical study, involving interviews using life history approaches, I want to inquire into how English teachers view both their own talk and that of the pupils. Additionally, I want to elicit teachers' views on the real benefits and challenges of small group learning and whole class discussion. I aim to set these empirical enquiries against the backdrop of an account of changes in educational policy and to show how these have framed debates around this type of learning in urban contexts with a view to helping teachers and schools promote classroom dialogue and learning talk.

Damien Darcy
London Knowledge Lab

Learning in Hybrid Spaces: The case of Open Life

My project looks at how a group of teenage students created their own virtual world to learn English literature ("Frankenstein").

In doing this, they set up a hybrid space – with learning occurring in both the classroom and the virtual world. This presentation will consider the social and educational practices employed by the students, and will assess the contribution of Lave and Wenger's, (1991) concept of "situated learning" to this situation.

The following questions are addressed:

- What is meant by a hybrid space, and why does it matter?

- How does learning occur in such spaces?

- What and how did the students learn throughout the project?

- What does "situated learning" have to say about what happened?

Helen Everett
Lifelong and Comparative Education

Faith schools, religious identity and attitudes of tolerance of diversity

In recent years much concern has been expressed regarding the effectiveness of faith schools in promoting community cohesion and in preparing their students for life in a diverse Britain. One particular concern is over the effect of these schools on their pupils' attitude of tolerance of diversity. This paper will outline the research which I propose to conduct into this topic.

Those who express concern about the impact of faith schools on their pupils' attitudes often cite the way that faith schools exacerbate segregation as a major cause of the problem. However, this paper suggests that an important aspect of faith schools, which is often neglected, is that one of their aims is about the nurture or reproduction of a particular religious identity. It is in the formation of this identity that the potential for the formation of intolerant attitudes lies. This research draws on Social Identity Theory as a way of exploring the impact of the religious identity on an individual's attitudes.

Taking a predominantly qualitative approach this research will involve Muslim, Evangelical Christian and Roman Catholic schools in England and will look at both the state maintained and the independent sector.

Frances Hampson-Jones
Psychology and Human Development

Reciprocal Teaching - an effective intervention to improve reading comprehension at Key Stage Two?

Reading comprehension difficulties are reported in 10 per cent of 7-11 year olds in UK schools (Cain and Oakhill, 2007). Reciprocal teaching is a 'multicomponent, metacognitive training package', which showed impressive gains in the USA during the 1980s (Palincsar and Brown,1984).

The approach combines content and method. Four strategies: predicting, clarifying, questioning and summarising are taught through modelling and dialogue; then, students gradually assume control of teaching within a small group, until they are actively involved in constructing meaning from text.

This study examines the effectiveness of the approach in a whole class setting. The research questions are:

1. Is the intervention effective for all students?

2. Can the intervention be improved by the addition of a further strategy – visualisation?

An initial study with three Year 5 classes has shown a significant improvement in reading comprehension for the treatment groups over a non-treatment control, but no difference in gains between the forms of reciprocal teaching.

Yuko Hashimoto
Learning, Curriculum and Communication

I have to learn 2000 kanji for my studies – Where shall I start?

I am interested in how learners of Japanese do in order to learn characters especially a part of Japanese scripts called kanji. When writing a Japanese text, a mixture of three different scripts, hiragana, katakana and kanji, are used. In addition, the forth script roma-ji, Romanised alphabets, is seen as station names and place names. Japanese writing form is very unique as a language, but at the same time it is complicated.

Kanji originally came from China and they have been adapted to Japanese. There are about 65000 kanji for reading and it is often said that learners need to learn about 2000 kanji in order to read newspapers and magazines. Kanji usually have multiple meanings and multiple forms of pronunciations. Therefore learning those characters is a huge challenge for most learners of Japanese, because they have to learn the visual image, the multiple meanings and the multiple forms of pronunciations.

I have only done 16 interviews with learners of Japanese and Chinese so far and I am planning to do more. At the moment I have focused on learners, but I am planning to explore teaching kanji as well.

In the presentation, first of all I will talk about the nature of the language. Then I will present the issues of Japanese writing system and how it is taught and finally I will discuss about findings from interviews.

Pam Holland
Early Childhood and Primary Education

Is access to headship through NPQH equitable?

This study looks at the data on over 3,000 senior school leaders who have demonstrated ambition and experience to become head teachers by undertaking the National Professional Qualification for Headship in one of nine regions. Analysis of participants' progress and success rates over a seven year period to establish whether any groups are more or less likely to succeed, has identified some interesting issues about professional development, school leadership, context, equity and social justice.

The presentation will cover the methods used and some of the outcomes, identifying under-achieving groups and issues for further research.

Halyna Kaluzhna
Online MRes

Teaching essay writing in a distance mode: success or failure?

Nowadays English has acquired the status of the lingua franca of the international academic and professional community. Still, a lot of researchers from Ukraine and other post-Soviet countries who are willing to get published in international journals or get an abstract accepted for an international conference find it difficult to adhere to English academic writing conventions and require additional training in English academic writing. To partially meet the needs of Ukrainian teachers and researchers a distance course on essay writing was developed at a Ukrainian university and was conducted four times.

While being extremely successful in the groups of English language teachers, post-graduate students, researchers and professionals in different fields, it appeared to be quite unsuccessful with MBA students at a Ukrainian university where it was offered as an optional course. The aim of the current research is to find out the possible reasons for the course success or failure.

The author analysed the journal entries and feedback questionnaires of 43 participants who successfully completed the course and answers to a questionnaire from 16 participants who dropped out and came up with a number of issues to be considered while conducting a distance course. Such factors as erroneous expectations about the course, time constraints and technical difficulties are reported as the ones hindering effective learning. Another important issue mentioned was the degree of the tutor's involvement in the course. Based on research findings some suggestions as to improving the chances for a distance course to succeed are given.

Kanako Kusanagi
Learning, Curriculum and Communication

Teacher development in context: preparing for an ethnographic study of the reception of a Japanese initiative in an Indonesian school

The study will examine how and to what extent the culture of the school is transformed and reconstructed to form a learning community when the Japanese lesson study approach is introduced into an Indonesian junior secondary school. Lesson study provides opportunities for

teachers to share problems and to improve collaboratively through reflection on classroom practice. The potential benefit of lesson study is thus not conceived as the transferring of a foreign model of pedagogy nor is its value not restricted simply to improving lessons, its real significance lies in the fact it acts as a gateway to open discussions on curriculums, lesson materials and long-term vision for teacher and student change (Wolf and Akita, 2008: 29).

However, when lesson study is brought into classrooms, the teachers face new opportunities and dilemmas in reflecting critically on their own professional identities, norms, knowledge, and beliefs. Thus, whilst the intention is the stimulation of a local learning community based on reflection and not on the substitution of local practice by something from outside, such reflection may itself be understood as a professional invasion. The resulting destabilising of schools and classrooms may therefore have negative as well as positive potential. I intend to conduct a participant observation, ethnographic study in an Indonesian junior secondary school in order to examine the ways in which the lesson study initiative is interpreted and enacted at ground level.

Norma Laing
Online MRes

A Research Identity Crisis? Examining the Nature of Architectural Research in Architectural Education, Ghana

Architecture is described as a vocational profession (CEBE, 2007), an interdisciplinary subject and a research discipline (Rendell, 2004; Griffiths, 2004). The multi-facetted nature of the discipline adds to the complexities associated with a clear and unambiguous understanding of what architectural research is (Rust et. al., 2007), resulting in debates in a bid to establish an identity in the academy as a form of research that is authentic and valid in its context as an applied profession (Wilson, 2008). In the UK and elsewhere, a clear 'definition' of architectural research seems elusive and at best is termed practice-led research (Rust *et al*, 2007). The issue appears to be one of a 'research identity crisis' in which the architectural community need to have 'their' form of research acknowledged and accepted whilst the education policy administrators need to verify the 'authenticity' of a unique architectural research which satisfies their research 'standards' (Rust *et al*, 2007).

Literature is 'silent' on architectural research in Ghana so the purpose of this research is to minimise this gap in the body of knowledge by exploring and describing how research is experienced and conceptualised in architectural education in Ghana.

By answering the question, 'What is architectural research and how is it characterised in architectural education in Ghana? This research seeks to arrive at a comprehensive description of architectural research as it is experienced by the architectural community in Ghana by addressing the place, process, product, application and implications of research in architectural education in Ghana.

Giota Lamprianou
Psychology and Human Development

Listening *to the voice of foster carers*

To date, the research in the area of the training foster carers and its impact is limited. This is a case study of a pilot adapted Webster-Stratton parenting programme offered to a group of

foster carers in a local authority of south London. In total 12 foster carers attended the programme consistently. The aim of the study is to give voice to foster carers by exploring which aspects of the programme they found helpful and how they perceived the impact of the programme on the way they feel/think about caring for foster children.

A mixed methods design is employed, using in-depth interviews with foster carers, observations of the weekly sessions and additional information collected through questionnaires. The semi-structured interviews, conducted with a sample of seven carers, were analysed employing the Thematic Analysis approach, providing very rich data. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire was completed by the carers and the teachers of their foster children pre- and post- programme and the Parenting Stress Index (Short Form) was completed by the carers. As a small number of questionnaires was returned to the researcher, descriptive statistics have been calculated and the results were used to compliment the qualitative data.

Carers reported overall a positive impact of the programme on themselves as parents and on their family life, but they also made reference to perceived barriers to the effectiveness of the programme. The implications of the study for the development and delivery of future parenting provision to foster carers are discussed.

Gordon Lee
Lifelong and Comparative Education

Pinocchio goes to college: Predestination or the social construction of a New university

A number of countries and jurisdictions including the UK, Australia, South Africa, Holland, United States and Canada have seen the evolution of higher education institutions from colleges or polytechnic institutes to dual sector universities (Garrod and Macfarlane, 2007). These hybrid institutions, combining further education or community college education or diploma level polytechnic education with university degree education, have been analysed by a number of researchers (Harman, 1977; Neave, 1979; Levin, 2003; Dennison and Schuetze, 2004; Dennison, 2006; Kraak, 2006; Garrod and Macfarlane, 2007; Macfarlane *et al*, 2007).

Often utilising a social constructionist epistemology, the researchers have attempted to discern the forces that influence this evolution. Some have applied organisational culture theory (Morphew and Huisman, 2002) to frame their analysis. Others assert that a different kind of institutional dynamic may be at work in dual sector universities. This organisational behaviour, grounded in neo-institutional culture theory (Pedersen and Dobbin, 2006), suggest there is a contrary motivation driving the actions of dual sector universities to differentiate themselves from other higher education institutions – Pedersen and Dobbin call this behaviour polymorphism.

This paper studies isomorphism and polymorphism in one dual sector university in British Columbia, Canada. It is a small piece of research that looks for signs of isomorphism and/or polymorphism in key institutional documents at one institution over a 12-year period. Using discourse analysis, the research analyses these documents to discern patterns and to interpret them so as to gain some understanding of the dynamics of institutional change.

Nirmala Lee
Lifelong and Comparative Education

Understanding financial literacy and financial literacy education: What might be the components of an effective financial literacy curriculum?

There is concern about the lack of financial literacy (FL) and the need for financial literacy education (FLE), but little or no attempt to understand their nature. The purpose of this study was to look beyond preconceived notions and to improve our understanding of FL and FLE. Three questions were identified for investigation: "What is financial literacy?", "What is FLE?" and "What might be the components of an effective financial literacy curriculum (FLC)?"

A sample of 103 financial advisers completed a four-page questionnaire; arguably, this was the first time that the perceptions of financial advisers in England on FL were analysed in a systematic manner. A sample of 65 FLE providers completed a four-page questionnaire; arguably, this was the first time an attempt was made to adopt the FSA framework on financial capability in order to map and understand FLE in England. A new synthesis of FLC, which I call CoBAL, was developed and offered to FL practitioners (FLPs). Arguably, this was the first time the domains identified by the FSA baseline survey were used in the development of FLE, and the first time FLPs undergoing FLE were the subject of a study. In the final phase of the research, providers and participants of FL courses were interviewed and the findings triangulated with earlier surveys as well as interaction with key informants.

The findings have implications for public policy. Efforts should be directed towards developing a more uniform and rigorous form of FLE that would facilitate more effective FL outcomes.

Jeffrey Lockshin
Online MRes

An action research study in managing student learning via assessment

It is well known that assessment has a significant impact on students' learning. From a practical standpoint, this implies that by choosing assessment methods or policies, the instructor manages how students approach their studies. Dissatisfaction with certain aspects of study of first year Economics students in Calculus, observed over several years, finally led to a strategic change in our assessment practices, to a much more formative style. While some of the changes in student behaviour were expected, others were not; nor did we anticipate the scale of the changes.

An issue that presented itself was: How do we the instructors evaluate the impact of the changes, given that we have a vested interest in showing that practice improved? For example, the examination mark for the first semester went up, but was that a result of our changes, or of our making the exam easier or marking scripts less harshly (either consciously or sub-consciously), or were the students simply smarter? How can we be sure that we are not deluding ourselves into believing that we are instigating positive change, given that we have no recourse to an external evaluation?

This paper suggests a possible solution, by means of objective statistical analysis that sidesteps possible variations in instructors' behaviour or students' characteristics. We show that the grounds for concern were legitimate and action was warranted. We also show that although final marks are not yet available, nevertheless there is strong reason to believe that significant, healthy changes were indeed brought about.

Magdalena Lopez Rodriguez
Educational Foundations and Policy Studies

Challenges and opportunities of migration: Polish migrant mothers and the capitalisation of meritocratic chances in the UK

Migration, as it is widely acknowledged in a contemporary migration discourse, brings to its actors various challenges of a social, economic and psychological nature. However, it also generates considerable opportunities for them which often may be the primary stimulus for migration. In this presentation, I focus on various ways in which Polish migrant mothers negotiate their migratory status in order to achieve their desired status and state of well-being and I discuss this in the light of Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and capital.

I look at three aspects through which these migrant mothers strive to seize opportunities and reach their imagined state of well-being: 1) a strong belief in meritocratic values; 2) the feeling of 'classlessness' and 3) the management of the 'migrant stigma'. I also explore how migrants' aspirations and undertakings shape the future of their children according to the parents' self-ascribed class identity and how families differ in capitalising the host country's meritocratic opportunities. The problem of deprivation and social disadvantage in inner city schools is often highlighted but no studies focusing on the strategies of middle-class ethnic minority families in such social settings have been carried out.

The study is based on qualitative in-depth interviews with 36 Polish migrant mothers mainly from London with children in primary or secondary state schools. Even though it could be said that mothers as a social group represent social heterogeneity, the majority of the mothers in the study are educated to a post-compulsory level, having some sort of post A-level qualifications. Half of the 36 mothers arrived in the UK after Poland's accession to the EU in 2004.

Kate Mackrell
Geography, Enterprise, Mathematics and Sciences

Cabri 3D: classifying the mathematics in student work

Cabri 3D is a 3D dynamic geometry software which offers students an environment in which they can be motivated to pursue their own goals using mathematical tools. This session will report on some of the issues encountered in analysing the mathematics engaged in with Cabri 3D in a class of grade 8 students in an Ontario school.

Mary Maina
Learning, Curriculum and Communication

University student groups; a study of the culture of a film group in supporting its student members

This chapter is a qualitative study which was undertaken with a student's film discussion group at a university in the United Kingdom. The focus was on the group's culture, seeking to understand how it supported its members to participate in its activities.

Ethnographic method using observation data collection techniques was employed in the study. The existing literature was also explored to understand methodological arguments in this field, and also studies that have been undertaken about groups. The purpose was to establish what is known, in order to compare and contrast with the findings of this study.

The analysis of the data is approached from a sociological social constructionist perspective. The aim is to examine how the students use social discourses, to construct beliefs, values and practices within the group. The analysis of the data was envisaged to demonstrate that the students' film group activities were directly related to their academic development.

The findings of the analysis so far suggest that the film group met to participate in discussions which focused on relationship difficulties and possible solutions to such problems. This is opposed to concentration on activities that are directly relevant to their academic advancement, which I had first predicted. The relationships discussed by the students ranged from engagement to marriage but specifically focused on young women and men.

During the discussions, the students brought in various forms of knowledge to support, refute or underpin their views on the topics they discussed. In the process, gender was also being constructed by both men and the women. During the discussions, supportive and unsupportive practices of the group were observed. The focus on relationship issues suggest that this is the area in which the students may need more support while in university.

Tereza Markidou
Arts and Humanities

'Mind the gap!' Three cases of art rhetoric and practice in Cypriot primary schools

In the light of educational reform, Cyprus primary education seeks to alleviate its retrospective orientation and move towards a modern, inter-disciplinary and multicultural approach to learning. Meanwhile, the status of the arts in the school curriculum has become a matter of fervent discussion among educators and policy makers, who argue its positive potential for learning and its role in developing diverse, creative and critical individuals. While anticipating imminent educational reform, practising teachers are making efforts to decipher and embrace novel pedagogies while trying to avoid accusations that they are disconnecting their teaching from the official art curriculum.

In my presentation I allude to the crevices that seem to be appearing between legislative documents and practising teachers and learners within art. Hence, I refer to three examples of art practice as witnessed while conducting a pilot study in Cypriot primary schools in February 2009. My overriding quest is to identify and discuss teachers' perceptions about art in comparison to their individual interpretation of rhetoric and practice. What is more, I deem it important to relate teachers' learning objectives with the actual learning that occurred in each case, as evidenced by the visual outcomes of the 8 year-old students. Therefore, within the spectrum of educational reform, I want to identify the imperatives that reflective Cypriot art educators have to bear in mind, in order enhance learning of, in and through art but, particularly, to enable engagement with art, thus expanding the opportunities for cultivating enquiry, experiment, and creativity.

Richard Marshall
Arts and Humanities

High stakes testing and vagueness: epistemic hostility and how to make a decision when we can't know.

Philosophical vagueness is understood either as a case of radical ignorance or a type of indeterminism. In the paper I attempt to briefly outline these approaches to vagueness and then apply the arguments to high stakes educational assessments. I conclude that what educationalists need to consider are decision theories related to situations where it is impossible to know all relevant factors in a situation requiring a decision where they stakes are high. The paper doesn't propose any such theory but does propose that this requirement is something that is required for all decisions where vagueness is a factor. Given that vagueness is a feature of nearly all aspects of any natural language it is suggested that such an approach is required in all educational judgements.

Arundhati Mukherjee
London Knowledge Lab

The use of online discussion in tertiary education

According to the literature, technological tools for learning are becoming increasingly interactive, widely distributed and collaborative. These new technologies provide a challenge to make learning an interactive and collaborative experience that is guided by a social constructivist approach to teaching and learning.

Online asynchronous discussions (OADs), or web- and text-based group interactions not occurring in real time, facilitate and support many-to-many, learner(s)-to-learner(s) interaction vital to collaboration in online learning environments. Facilitating and supporting interaction potentially promotes collaboration. However, it does not guarantee it. Collaboration is more than interaction and requires 'coordinated, synchronous activity that is the result of a continued attempt to construct and maintain a shared conception of a problem' (Roschelle and Teasley, 1995, 970). Collaboration represents a 'purposive relationship', the intent of which is to 'produce something. To solve a problem, create, or discover something' (Schrage, 1995, 29), and to work together to achieve shared goals (Kaye, 1992; Roschelle and Teasley, 1995).

Thus, while it might be desirable to promote collaboration in the context of online learning through use of an OAD, such collaboration will not automatically occur simply because peer-to-peer interaction is supported and facilitated. In order for interaction to lead to collaboration in a context of online learning, specific measures must be taken to actively and consciously promote collaboration. Therefore from the research perspective my fundamental research question is:

To what extent is the current use of online discussion environments based on the principles of collaborative learning?

Mathew Ngunga
Online MRes

Textual interactions: a key component in online learning environments

Contemporary learning techniques have increasingly explored online environment as mediums for pedagogy. Proponents have argued that online environment offers flexibility in learning for individuals who would otherwise not consider learning given their busy schedules. The online mediums have however come under increasing criticism about their ability to adequately support learning. The discourse has largely focused on the lack of face-to-face interactions between teachers and students and student and student. In order to assess the extent to which online interactions occur, this study will seek to explore the nature of online class participants' interactions within these environments. This study will look at the role of interactive writing as an integral element in the conceptual development that takes place in such online courses. We will discuss the extent to which the interactive textual environment is particularly facilitative of learning because the nature of online interactive writing itself bootstraps the construction of learning.

Chara Orthodoxou
London Centre for Leadership in Learning

Can leaders meet the needs of increasingly diverse schools? Challenges, insights and tools

Social and linguistic differences and the identities that flow from them constitute a real leadership challenge. Cyprus, a country with a relatively homogeneous population in the past, now requires leaders to engage more people at all levels, to identify and communicate values, and learn from other people with a different life experiences. Research and practice provided convincing evidence that there is minor possibility of creating and sustaining high-quality learning environments without a skilled and committed leader to help shape teaching and learning. That's especially true in schools facing demographic changes. This paper begins by examining the nature of leadership practices aimed at promoting social justice and how they can be carried out effectively with examples from research. An examination of how to best prepare culturally responsive leaders is then discussed. A descriptive view of leadership requires rich and vivid description of events and case studies provide exactly this.

The four Primary schools selected for inclusion in this study exhibited a diversity of leadership styles in changing their schools. Apart from co-ordinating a variety of operations, head teachers in these schools were promoters of inclusive environments and conflict managers, but most importantly, they were creators of new and more complex meaning-making systems that helped them deal with multiple demands and uncertainty. This work lays an important foundation for understanding the pivotal role that leaders play in diverse schools, for elaborating the nuances of what culturally responsive leadership might entail, and for highlighting the significance of leaders developing such leadership practices.

Maria Papapolydorou
Lifelong and Comparative Education

Students' friendship formation and the role of the school's ethnic composition

This paper examines the relationship between students' friendships and the school's ethnic composition. Friendship formation across and within ethnic groups is highly relevant to social capital theory which is currently widely used by the academic community. Putnam (2007) - one of the main social capital theorists - has argued quite controversially on the basis of his area-level data in the US that ethnic diversity reduces social capital both across and within ethnic groups, even when controlling for income levels. How far would this apply in other national contexts, and what are its implications for education? Does this mean that students in multi-cultural schools form less intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic friendships and trust each other less? This paper investigates the extent to which Putnam's latest suggestions are valid in another setting such as multi-cultural London. Preliminary analysis of the data suggests that the theoretical extension of Putnam's model does not hold true in our sample.

Whereas ethnic diversity in schools seems to encourage inter-ethnic friendships to a significant degree it does not appear to have a negative impact on either intra-ethnic friendships or overall trust. Yet, it appears that the ethnic mix of the school is only one of the factors that influence students' friendships. The way students form friendships is a complicated procedure which does not only lie on their ethnic background but also on their social class and their gender.

Sally Quilligan
Learning, Curriculum and Communication

The skill of summary is included in most medical-education communication curricula. Is this skill of value in student-doctor/simulated-patient consultations?

Introduction: Use of the skill of summary, the deliberate step of making an explicit verbal summary to the patient of the information gathered so far, is emphasised in both teaching and assessment of communication skills in medicine. There is, however, little research that has investigated the impact of use of this skill on either the patient or clinician. This project used micro-analysis of video consultations to study whether using the skill of summary was of value to either or both, the student-doctor (SD) and simulated-patient (SP).

Methods: Mixed method design using video recorded consultations and interviews. Recordings of 10 consultations were analysed to identify types of summary used. Two contrasting cases were then micro-analysed and interviews were held with the 2SDs and 2 SPs involved in the consultations, using the recording as a trigger.

Main Findings: Six different types of summary were identified within the data. Summary did appear to aid accuracy but also had other unwanted effects not recognized in the literature. Information about patient's perspective was summarised much less frequently than the disease components of the patient's story.

Conclusions: Use of the skill of summary is much more complex than the literature suggests. When teaching about summary we need to address the purpose of summary, accuracy, the importance of flexibility and the effect on the patient.

Zulfiqar Qureshi
Learning, Curriculum and Communication

Promoting non-native student agency in academic writing conferences

Feedback is viewed as an essential part of assessment practice in higher education. It is expected by students, provided by lecturers and legitimised as a core academic practice by the institution. Yet the relative success of feedback in improving student performance has been questioned by some, leading to studies that have investigated procedural, contextual and affective issues. One argument that has surfaced in the field is that feedback can only be successful if it involves students more actively with lecturers adopting a less directive role.

While desirable, this increased level of agency on the part of students to negotiate feedback on their own work may prove difficult to implement. Students' previous educational practices may not have prepared them well enough to undertake such a role; indeed, some may not wish to do so. The issue is particularly relevant to the large number of non native students that come to UK universities each year. While native UK students have at least been acculturated within an educational perspective of 'individualism' and 'independence', foreign students may not have and could struggle to adopt a more 'liberatory' role during feedback.

The presentation will briefly discuss three main areas: the importance of student agency in feedback, potential difficulties for non-native students and conferences as a viable medium to promote agency. It will then go on to outline and discuss a proposed research design for a study into conferencing at a university in the UK

Saima Rana
London Knowledge Lab

ICT in schools and visions of post-industrialism: how to understand the theoretical motivations of policy formation

The introduction of ICT into schools is a key policy initiative in UK schools. In this paper I frame an argument around Kumar's understanding of the development of the idea of Post-industrialism to outline some of the key features of this policy initiative. Surprisingly I conclude that an ignored feature of one of the key theories of post-industrialism might offer clues as to why the policy initiative is failing to bring about the educational benefits the policy was expected to bring about.

Amin Rehmani
Learning, Curriculum and Communication

Changing teachers' conceptions of teaching, changing practice: case studies of professional development teachers from Pakistan

This study examines four professional development teachers' (PDTs) conceptions of teaching in the context of Pakistan. Through the voices of the PDTs it explore what are their conceptions of teaching and whether these conceptions change or develop through the intervention of an in-service professional development programme (MEd) and whether they mediate their approaches to teaching and inform their practice when enacted.

An interpretive and constructivist approach using the case study methodology has been employed to present the thick description of the four case studies. It is argued that any consideration of teachers' conceptions of teaching would require an examination of the socio-cultural and religious contexts in which the teachers live and teach. The study is conducted in three phases. Semi-structured interviews, students' focus groups, a questionnaire and documentary analyses have been employed as research instruments.

The findings indicate that contextual factors play a significant role in shaping teachers' conceptions of teaching such as the teaching and learning environment in schools, CPD, teachers' own schooling and teachers, their colleague-teachers, socio-cultural and religious context. Teachers' conceptions gradually develop through the MEd course and shift from quantitative, ie, teacher-centred transmission and conventional approaches to teaching to qualitative, ie, child-centred, transformative and constructivist approaches with much reflection-in-action. Beside the cognitive conceptions, affective conceptions also significantly emerge. It is argued that the integration of both the qualitative/cognitive and qualitative/affective conceptions is crucial in teachers' approaches to teaching in this context.

Katharina Schumann
Educational Foundations and Policy Studies

The "Designed Child"? Images of human nature/ of the child in educational theory, neuroscience and genetics

…is the working title of my doctoral thesis which I will outline in the presentation.

The leading questions are: which explicit or implicit images of human nature, specifically as they concern children, exist in education theory, Neuroscience and Genetics? In particular: which words are used to describe human nature or the child? What are the ideas about the initial state and the intended future state of the child? What means are chosen to achieve this intended future state? What grade of effectiveness is expected for these means?

It seems likely that there will be different convictions on whether the most important triggers for evolution are released from outside ("nurture thesis") or from inside ("nature or personality thesis").

The presentation will give details on (1) the difference between an image of human nature and an image of the child and (2) a tripartite distinction of (a) educational practice (b) educational doctrine like, eg, Waldorf education or Montessori education and (c) educational theory, which offers an academic analysis of educational practice and educational doctrine.

Furthermore the presentation outlines (3) the hypotheses of the work and the taken methods to answer the above questions on the images of human nature and of the child.

Mariana Sena Amaral da Cunha
ONLINE MRES

Inclusion in Portuguese schools: Physical educators' teaching experiences and students' with special needs social-educational placement history

Nowadays, the inclusion of individuals with special needs (SN) in general classes is one of the most significant topics discussed in the education field (Zavacky, 2003). Portugal has

been recently experiencing a considerable shift from specialized institutions to official schools with respect to its students' educational placements. Inevitably, the inclusion movement exerts a major impact on curricular subject areas, including Physical Education (PE) (Craft, 1994; Hodge *et al*, 2004).

This research project aims to (I) analyse the social and educational path of students with SN and (II) characterise the educational strategies employed by general physical education teachers (GPE), as well as their instructional difficulties. Participants are the students with SN, their parents, and GPE teachers from the second and third cycles of basic compulsory education, and secondary education. Data will be collected using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

The results will be analysed through quantitative and qualitative approaches. Findings are expected to reveal how the social and educational path of students with SN is significantly influenced by specific factors (eg, type and level of disability, parents' social-economical and marital status), and most of the GPE teachers experience implementation difficulties on dealing with the process of inclusion (Block, 2003), not answering the needs of their students properly (Correia, 2006).

Gareth Smith
Arts and Humanities

'I drum, therefore I am?' Identities and learning of kit drummers

A recent participant in this study said of being a drummer that 'it's not what I do, it's who I am'. Drummers, however, are under-represented in the research literature, and are frequently misunderstood; books and web sites are dedicated to 'drummer jokes', and perhaps the world's best-known drummer is one of Jim Henson's Muppets. Who are these people? What and how do they learn? Identities and music education are closely linked, for, as Green has noted, 'identity… (is) 'intrinsically and unavoidably connected to particular ways of learning' (Green, 2002: 216).

Drummers' identities and learning are explored using a new model of passive and active identity realisation (PAIR), passive and active learning realisation (PALR), meta-identities, contextual identities and the snowball self. Issues of gender and ethnicity are investigated in relation to drummers' identities and learning, whose reciprocal relationship forms the basis of the developing theory.

Increasingly, drummers are finding their teaching and learning legitimised by the (formerly often antagonistic) educational establishment. Formal and informal learning are discussed, including use of the internet as an educational resource; the internet can of course also be a vital tool in identity realisation.

The study is from an emic perspective as the researcher is a drummer and drum kit teacher. Data have been collected from semi-structured interviews and questionnaires with two groups of participants – teenage drummers, and professional drummers over the age of thirty.

It is hoped that this work-in-progress will interest music education practitioners as well as music education sociologists.

Kenzo Sung
Educational Foundations and Policy Studies

Coloniality and education: contextualising race, sexuality and empire in post-war British and American dispersal/desegregation policies

In the 1960-70s central government in the United States and Britain turned to explicitly racialised education policies as a means to address issues of racial disparities in schools, using the rhetoric of desegregation or dispersal respectively. Both reform agendas were based on assumptions embedded in liberal assimilation rhetoric. However, the social and political contexts of both post-war cases led to different policy formations, responses, and ultimately demises that challenged such discourses of liberalism. The presentation draws upon sociologist Quijano's 'Coloniality of Power' theoretical frame to explore how the ideas of race and empire bear differently upon such reforms in both countries. Analysis centres on how changes in the imperial trajectories illuminate the complex relations of sexuality, race, schooling and nation-building during this historical period. Particular attention is given to how fears regarding racialised and sexualised bodies shaped and informed the popular discourses and government responses regarding policies supposedly designed to address the 'colour problem.' This presentation suggests that existing scholarship regarding this period of educational history lacks attention to how the protection of the body of the white (school) girl becomes a rhetorical tool that simultaneously threatens and maintains boundaries of race, nationhood, sexuality, and empire. Lastly, such narratives privileged male voices and bodies on both sides of the educational struggle, marginalising females as objects or enablers of males in both contexts.

Wayne Tennent
Psychology and Human Development

Assessing reading at Key Stage 2: SATs as measures of children's inferential abilities

This presentation describes two studies. The first study was designed to investigate the ways in which the statutory assessments of reading for 11-year-old children in England assess inferential abilities. The second study was designed to investigate the levels of performance achieved in these tests in 2001 and 2002 by 11-year-old children attending state-funded local authority schools in one London borough. In the first study, content and questions used in the reading papers for the Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) in the years 2001 and 2002 were analysed to see what types of inference were being assessed.

This analysis suggested that the complexity involved in inference making and the variety of inference types that are made during the reading process are not adequately sampled in the SATs. Similar inadequacies are evident in the ways in which the programmes of study for literacy recommended by central government deal with inference. In the second study, scripts of completed SATs Reading papers for 2001 and 2002 were analysed to investigate the levels of inferential ability evident in scripts of children achieving different SATs levels. The analysis suggests that children who only just achieve the 'target' Level 4 do so with minimal use of inference skills. They are particularly weak in making inferences that require the application of background knowledge. Thus, many children who achieve the reading level (Level 4) expected of 11-year-olds are entering secondary education with insecure inference-making skills that have not been recognised.

Michael Tzanakis
Centre for Longitudinal Studies

Ethnic identity, capital transmission and adolescent educational and occupational expectations

Research has shown that in the UK there is wide variation in the life chances of different ethnic groups. Ethnic stratification and ethnic inequality affect the odds for social mobility, wage promotion, educational qualifications, entry to better jobs, and labour market outcomes, to differing extents for young men and women in various ethnic groups. Therefore, it is expected that parental environments across ethnic groups transmit forms of capital differentially to children both in kind and in degree. Because ethnicity is a major determining factor in the life chances and SES success, this study will examine how parental ethnic identification is associated with various forms of capital transmission as this is seen in their children's expectations and ethnic identity formation.

Thus, parental ethnic identity via the process of intergenerational transmission of human, social and cultural capital is linked to intergenerational mobility probabilities of the offspring. Adolescent educational and occupational expectations are expected to reflect this differential process of parental capital transmission across ethnic groups. Expectations are hypothesised to form in response to the availability of specific capitals and capabilities as these are conditioned by parental ethnic identity. Mothers and fathers are also hypothesised to exert different effects either via sex-identification or sex-stereotyping by receiving feedback from their children's educational attainment.

The conceptual framework of the study is based on three theoretical strands: First, ecological-developmental perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2003); second, the mediation/moderation modelling (Marjoribanks, 2005) and third, the capitals and capabilities formulation as set out by Schuller, Bynner and Feinstein (2004).

Shobha Vadrevu
Online MRes

"Miss, will you be my friend?": Examining the online/offline distinction in research on Facebook

Virtual worlds have long been conceptualised by researchers in terms of their anonymous nature and their potential for providing a tabula rasa from which users can create new personas. Early internet research pointed to new patterns of social behaviour, and predictions of isolation experienced by users who are drawn further into the online worlds, while moving away from their offline identities. However more recently, it has been shown that the online/offline distinction may not be a pragmatic one, and nowhere is this more evident than on social networking sites like Facebook, where identities and relationships are rooted in the 'real world', yet develop in particular ways because of the added online dimension.

While teachers maintain a professional identity in the physical site of the school, they drop this persona in favour of a more relaxed personal one when they are in their physical social spaces, which are not usually shared with students. However with the advent of Facebook, more teachers and students are sharing social spaces, and this has implications for the decisions teachers make regarding their identity management, as well as their perceptions

about how they should handle students who become their 'friends'. This paper will explore the implications of the fading online/offline distinction for a study involving identity management by teachers who share online social spaces with their students.

Michael Vogel
Continuing and Professional Education

Research into emergent social phenomena: some epistemological and methodological considerations

The emergence of social phenomena such as trust, co-operation, the 'Mexican wave' or collective action from the complex interactions of individuals seems still insufficiently understood. Commonly referring to the appearance of new properties or patterns in self-organising systems, the concept of (weak) emergence combines causality and meaning. Emergent patterns result from micro-level dynamics which are governed by cause-effect relations. Yet the microdynamics themselves have no meaning to the involved actors. It is only the macro-level patterns which can carry meaning. Therefore, in order to capture both causality and meaning, research into emergent social phenomena (ESP) would need to adopt a positivist as well as an interpretive perspective. This, however, is rarely the case, which is why micro-macro gaps tend to characterise studies of this kind.

My paper is a tentative critique of the state of research into ESP. It discusses how ESP may be understood better and proposes two answers, one being epistemological, and the other methodological. The paper recommends making more extensive use of computational simulation in social research.

Elizabeth Wady
Geography, Enterprise, Mathematics and Sciences

Line graphs in GCSE Science: Identifying learning environments linked with deep, surface and strategic learning approaches

Many workplaces require employees of intermediate and higher level to understand graphs in order to control and improve processes (Hoyles *et al*, 2007). Deep learning represents students seeking the underlying meaning of information and adopting behaviours to meet that goal. Strategic learning refers to an efficient organisation of learning time and space. In contrast, in surface learning the goal is merely to achieve a pass. The learning approach utilised affects the quality of learning and it is thus important to determine which graphical environments are associated with which approach. This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What learning approach(es) do year ten students adopt in mathematical and scientific graph lessons?

2. What learning behaviours occur in mathematics and scientific graph lessons?

3. Are learning approaches associated with particular resources and individuals?

Data from the science lessons in three London schools has been analysed and will be discussed. It was found that deep and strategic learning were more prevalent than the

surface approach. It was also found that the behaviours students use in each approach, are limited in comparison to those they could utilise. Learning environments, with the exception of student-student dialogue were strongly correlated with two or more learning approaches. Hoyles, C., Noss, R., Bakker, A. and Kent, P. (2007), techno-mathematical literacies in the workplace. London: Teaching and Learning Research Programme.

Todd Waller
Education and International Development

Mother Teresa wore Birkenstocks: an analysis of self and spiritual growth from former volunteers who walked in the shoes of the Missionaries of Charity.

In 1985, Seattle University initiated a volunteer programme which allows students to serve alongside the Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata. There are two primary goals of this study; one, is to understand how has one's perspective on life changed after having cleaned wounds, fed malnourished babies and cared for the dying in Kolkata hospices and two, to specifically probe into the inner and private lives of former volunteers in hope of understanding how these encounters may have depended on one's spiritual life. This is not a study about Mother Teresa, although her presence as the Superior General of the Order of the Missionaries of Charity permeates throughout these interviews.

David Wellings
Psychology and Human Development

Conceptual and methodological considerations in estimating pupil motivation in post-16 education

In my recently completed PhD thesis I questioned the efficacy of using what has been defined as 'policy with regards to motivation' to enhance the retention and achievement of vocational students and identified the potential benefits and limitations of empirical research into student motivation in post-16 education. The research employed a conceptual framework to estimate the expectancies, values and self-regulated learning of students taking Advanced GNVQs and AVCEs. Self-report measures were administered to 33 Business Advanced GNVQ and 165 Business AVCE students at three institutions over a three year period. These were followed by interviews with 15 GNVQ and 50 AVCE students and teaching staff. The main conclusions were that institutions reinterpreted policy to reflect their culture and the character of the student intake; that student level factors had a greater effect than course and institutional factors in influencing students' perceptions and that prior achievement and students' expectancies of success were the main effects on the performance of students.

This presentation will argue that a renewed emphasis on psychological concepts of motivation is required to counter the poorly conceptualised concepts of motivation that dominate the policy discourse in post-16 education before identifying a number of possible limitations in this approach. These include the differing perspectives on the nature of classroom motivation in the psychology literature, the unique challenges of researching post-16 education in England and the problems in identifying a relevant, valid and reliable scale for estimating students' perceptions.

Sean Whittle
Arts and Humanities

Testing times for faith schools

This paper challenges the popular assumptions about the current healthy state of faith schools, and Catholic ones in particular, in countries like the UK. It is widely assumed that since New Labour came to power in 1997 faith schools have enjoyed a high profile and have become increasingly popular amongst politicians and parents alike. This is a deeply flawed assumption. The reality is that these are highly testing times for all faith schools. It will be explained that faith schools are in fact under huge pressures and threats. Using Catholic education as a paradigm example it will be shown that there are a wide range of threats and tensions from those who challenge the legitimacy of all faith schools. In addition it will be explained that for Catholic faith schools the situation is even worse because Catholic education faces a number of significant internal threats. Each of these various threats and tension will be identified and explained. It will be concluded that these are indeed difficult and testing times for all faith schools because they are under sustained criticism and attack.

Faith schools stand in need of support and a vigorous defence of their legitimacy to be part of the educational provision in a country such as the UK.