Closing Comments and Report for the AGM meeting
ICET 2014, 58th World Assembly
University of Ontario Institute of Technology
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Synopsis

The conference program consists of five strands of topics, highlighting the theme of the conference **Moving Forward in Curriculum, Pedagogy and Leadership**. These five strands include "Pedagogy and Practice", "Inclusion and Justice", "Online and Distance Education", "Policy and Politics", and "Education for Sustainable Development".

For the past three days, anecdotes and feedback from our international delegates and audience reaction in the sessions have shown that the conference was well received, reflecting high quality and informative intellectual communications and hospitable arrangements engaging local communities with thoughtful details.

Some highlights of the conference

The sessions provided quality presentations that demonstrated a body of solid research, classroom projects, as well as review and reflection reports on teaching practice and policies covering a broad range of areas. The collective effort from the ICET 2014 community, included our board executive committee, ICET 2014 planning committee, and mostly our delegates contributed to an excellent conference program, which envision the educational **leadership** in advanced research and practice across diverse areas represented by our delegates from all over the world.

Besides the themes being categorized by our planning committee based on the content of the submissions, our delegates have shown promising contributions toward a common goal of improvement of **curriculum** design, strategic instruction, and educational **leadership** via various forms, for example, research using different research methods by scholars at different stage of their careers, such as Levon Blue's ethnographic, qualitative doctoral project on financial literacy education in an Ontario aboriginal community, where she grew up; Jamaican scholars, Dr. Mairette Newman and Dr. Carol Gentles' five year longitudinal study on the evolvement of beginning teachers' professional development; Dr. Patricia Ezenandu from Nigeria and her colleagues' quasi-experimental study to capture the effects of metacognitive strategy on students' reading comprehension.

Aside from these research papers presented in the conference, we have witnessed a strong trend of work discussing justice through teaching and learning, and the inquiry of the legitimacy of knowledge, which resonances with Dr. Lee Maracle's talk at the opening Assembly. These include but were not limited to Dr. Janette Hughes' work with her student, on critical digital

literacies pedagogy to improve literacy in under-performing students trough mobile technology; Dr. Edmore Mutekwe and Dr. Maropeng Modiba's Zimbabwean example of pedagogic challenges influenced by gender issues; and the work of Dr. Tola Olujuwon and Dr. Juliet Perumal on teachers' perceptions toward teacher leadership where they outlined the barriers that mitigate against teacher leadership and concluded that if teacher leadership is to thrive, teachers must work collaboratively and their roles and responsibilities must be distributed within the schools.

One area our delegates identified that is close to our heart and needs much of attention for improvement is teacher education, the critical core of **pedagogy**. From the keynote by Dr. Tony Townsend from the University of Glasgow and the talk at the opening assembly by Dr. Michael Salvatori, CEO at the Ontario College of Teachers, we have achieved a consensus that we must constantly innovate teacher education, which is inevitable. Only when we embrace these challenges, can we meet the standard for great teaching. Many presentations and workshops were dedicated to this effort through promoting evidence-based, data-driven instruction, teaching with reflection, teaching to break through routine practice. Many important issues are discussed at the conference that pointed out the root factors influencing teacher education. This includes how teacher professional development takes into account local culture, socio-economic status factors and politics in teaching practice as a reality, whether these allow for the possibility that are different from academic and policy makers' perspectives. For example, UOIT's faculty members, Dr. Laura Pinto and Dr. Robin Kay worked with Toronto School Board curriculum leader, Rachel Cook, provided a hands-on workshop on remodeling lesson collaboratively for pre-service and in-service teachers; the thought-provoking work by UOIT professors Dr. Diana Petrarca and Dr. Ann LeSage on the admissions criteria in re-considering the pre-service teacher education admissions interview"; Dr. Helena Amaral da Fontoura's work on Brazilian teachers' training by reflecting upon the hows and whys in a pedagogical residence; and Dr. Michael Strong and Dr. John Gargani's teacher evaluation from the United States innovatively linking observations of practice with student test scores.

In talking about the challenges for teaching and learning in the 21st century, we must address the prominent technology advances and our young generation who are immersed in the technology-oriented culture. Dr. Isobel Pedersen, another keynote speaker outlined some questions on how technology frames human identity. By using communication theories and humanities methods, she furthered our understanding about the impact of emergent digital media on life and culture. New digital devices are often invented and embraced by society before we are able to understand the impact they have on our lives, culture, art and social practices. She explained and showed how computer devices and gadgets worn on the body alter the ways people interact with others and participate in culture.

Our educators and researchers at the conference have demonstrated that their critical perspectives and recommendations on fine-toned instructional strategies ensure the effective development and implementation of **curriculum**, including compatible and relevant teaching materials and technology-enhanced educational interventions. This is, for example, represented by the UOIT faculty member, Dr. Jia Li's research using focus groups with middle school students in Boston in collaborating with Harvard Graduate School of Education on urban teens' perspectives on social networking media and its applications for literacy instruction and learning,

and the work by Dr. Thomas Ryan from Nipissing University, Ontario, regarding perspectives on social media use in the classroom with compelling social media resources.

Award Papers

Peer–reviewed papers were considered for awards in the following categories: single-authored, multi-authored, student-authored, and student-supervisor authored. The reviewers recognize the following papers as exemplary:

Single-Authored Paper Title: A Poetic Response to Policy Layering, Intensification, and the De-Skilling of Teachers

Author: Dr. Laura Pinto

Affiliation: University of Ontario Institute of Technology

Abstract: For several decades, the literature has documented ways in which teachers have been subject to declines in professional autonomy resulting from intensification. In Ontario, intensification has arisen from neo-liberal education reform mandating of multi-layered educational policy affecting teachers in their daily lesson planning. To make sense of the proliferation of policy, this project applied arts-based research. Teacher candidates collectively composed a poetic response that allowed them to reflect on how this shapes their work as incumbent professionals, underscoring the role of educational politics in intensification and de-skilling of teachers. Using the poem created by teacher candidates as data, this paper analyzes implicit implications that were given voice by the creative expression afforded by poetry.

Multi-Authored Paper: two papers are awarded in this category; these papers garnered identical ranking and are listed in alphabetical order:

First Multi-Authored Paper Title: Effects of Self-Explanation Reading Training (SERT) on Second Language Learners' Comprehension of Expository and Narrative Text

Authors: Dr. Patricia Eziamaka Ezenandu and Dr. Chinyere Henrietta Maduabuchi

Affiliations: Federal College of Education Abeokuta Ogun State Nigeria and Ebonyi State University Abakaliki Ebonyi State Nigeria

Abstract: Reading research in Nigeria indicates that poor reading comprehension directly or indirectly affects students' performance in various school subjects. Thus, this research study investigated the effect of self-explanation reading training strategy on second language learners' comprehension of expository and narrative texts. The study adopted a pretest, posttest control group, quasi-experimental design. Random sampling procedure was adopted in selecting 3 intact classes each from 3 senior secondary schools in Abeokuta Metropolis, for the study. The study also determined the interaction effect of verbal ability on students' comprehension of texts. Descriptive and inferential statistics were adopted in analyzing the data collected. The result indicated that there was a significant difference in the pretest, posttest mean score of students exposed to treatment $F_{(2,124)} = 51.348$ $p<0.05$. Students in the 2 self-explanation groups1

(Science) and 1 (Art class) obtained the highest posttest mean achievement scores ($\acute{X}$=16.77 and $\acute{X}$=10.21) respectively compared to control ($\acute{X}$=7.23). Hence, SERT enhanced students' comprehension of text.

Second Multi-Authored Paper Title:

Authors: Dr. Edmore Mutekwe and Dr. Maropeng Modiba

Affiliations: Vaal University of Technology, South Africa and University of Johannesberg, South Africa

Abstract: This study explored how patriarchal ideology in Zimbabwe disguises as common sense in the school curriculum leading pupils towards a gender polarised consciousness. Focus group and individual interviews and classroom observations were used for data collection. The findings revealed the ways in which the patriarchal hegemony that is promoted through the curriculum reflected taken for granted masculine and feminine roles and existential attitudes, beliefs and values within society. Through their interactions with teachers, girls were oriented towards developing the type of consciousness, personal demeanour, modes of self-presentation, self-image and the gender identifications which predisposed them to specific social roles and competencies. The conclusion is that the patriarchal nature of the Zimbabwean school curriculum advantages boys through institutionalised and ingrained gender role beliefs and ritualised behaviours valued by the society.

Student-Authored Paper Title: The Place of Supervision in Teacher Professional Development: A Case Study of Supervisory Practices of Education Officers in Ekiti State Primary Schools

Author: Christianah Bamikole

Affiliation: University of the West Indies, Jamaica

Abstract: Supervision is connected to teacher professional development. However, as it is currently practiced in Ekiti State primary schools in Nigeria, it does not appear that this process is effectively contributing to teacher professional development. This is because the existing supervisory practice of Education Officers is hierarchical and authoritarian and does not promote the autonomy of the teacher as a professional. My research looks at current supervisory practices and the prevailing notion of professional development. The study is qualitative and it employs the case study method of inquiry. Participants in the study comprised of four selected Education Officers and twelve teachers from four different Local Government Education Authorities, of Ekiti State Universal Basic Education Board. Initial findings revealed that due to poor supervisory practices teachers are often excluded from decision making when it comes to issues relating to their professional growth. The research suggests that a more democratic process which sees the teacher as a reflective practitioner will usher in an authentic conception of teacher professional development. The significance of this study relates to the fact that proper educational supervision for teacher professional development would enhance the overall goal of instructional delivery.

Student/Supervisor-Authored Paper Title: Exploring the Relevance of Financial Literacy Education in a First Nation Community

Authors: Levon Ellen Blue, Mark Brimble and Peter Grootenboer

Affiliation: Griffith University, Australia

Abstract: The relevance of financial literacy education (FLE) in a remote Canadian First Nation community was explored after a generic FLE workshop failed to gain traction. To understand the relevance of FLE in the Community, group interviews, a Community Summit and field notes were used as sources of evidence. During the analysis phase practice theory was use to examine the 'sayings', 'doings' and 'relatings' in a financial context. Next, we examined the possibilities of what can be achieved in the Community and find that site based and Community developed FLE was desired. Reported in this paper are the planning and initiating stages of site based education that occurred.

All papers are available in the ICET 2014 Conference Proceedings.

Conclusion

To conclude, ICET 2014, 58th World Assembly has made a great contribution to addressing these timely topics in education. While we are aware of diverse factors intertwined with the curriculum, pedagogy and leadership in Education, our delegates felt hopeful to and up to the exciting and inevitable challenges in the educational horizon. The success of the ICET 2014 assembly belongs to the collective hard work, and we, the planning committee, would like to once again to thank all who supported to make the conference a success:

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To the UOIT Community: Faculties, Communications and Marketing, Office of Research Services, Information and Technology Services, Finance, Scheduling, Registrar's Office, Facilities, Security, Provost Office, President's Office, the Print Shop, Parking Services, UOIT Residence and Conference Centre (South Village), UOIT Aboriginal Centre

To the Oshawa Community: O'Neill Collegiate Ensemble Erin Collins Music Director with Kyeong Cho Principal, Isabella's, Luna, Paraphernalia Books 'n Stuff, Avanti's, The Table, Berry Hill, Extreme Pita, Sante Fe Salon, Candy Cause, Stuttering John's, Prospects Bar and Grill, Aramark, La Quinta, Quality Inn, Residence Inn by Marriott

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To the wider Ontario Community: Ontario College of Teachers

To ICET Delegates

To all: Thank you, Merci, Megwich