EDITORIAL

Participation, diversity, involvement and engagement in local and global contexts

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As this volume goes to press, collaboration across boundaries has never been more important as academics across disciplines race to understand the Covid-19 pandemic and develop both medical and societal responses to it and its longer-term effects. The skills of participation and the bringing together of diverse perspectives, experience and knowledge will be paramount to these efforts. Digital communication plays a pivotal role in this, not least in the education sector where learning across distances means new forms of learning communities and practices are evolving. The lessons about participation and diversity within this volume could not be timelier.

In our first article 'Support for refugee students in a Newfoundland high school: merits and ramifications' Xuemei Li and Hua Que used ethnographic research to understand leadership and an important distinction is made between a resource-oriented and a problem-oriented attitude towards multicultural student population. This is examined in contrasting settings. The article illustrates that where diversity is seen as a resource rather than a problem the leaders' and teachers' attitudes and strategies in relation to diversity and acculturation can make a significant impact on teacher satisfaction, school culture and minority student achievement in the school.

Next, in 'Examining opportunities for children to participate in formal early childhood music education' Lenita Hietanen, Anu Sepp and Heikki Ruismäki focus on children's participation in cultural life and arts. Three decades after the signing of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the gap between policy programmes and their practical implementation in arts and culture education is investigated, in particular in relation to early childhood music education. The research took the form of a qualitative case study examining children's opportunities for participation in early childhood music education in four European countries, namely Estonia, Finland, Greece and Iceland. Through content analysis, it was found that policy programmes appear to emphasise children's rights in music, but there are variations in terms of implementation at the organisational level.

From early childhood music education, we move to Higher Education and the article 'Student teacher participation in school placement: a micropolitical analysis of students' experiences of system tensions'. Here David H. Johnston examines student teachers' experiences while on school placement through

the lenses of micropolitics and community tensions. The tensions that were found included: tensions between continuity and innovation; the tension between being a learner and being a teacher; the tension between autonomy and collegiality; and the tension between proactivity and receptivity. This research shows the need for micropolitical literacy to be covered in initial teacher education so that student teachers can understand and deal with these tensions.

In the next article 'Educational design research in collaboration with students: using digital tools to learn about reindeer herding within a vocational Sámi pedagogical context' Pigga Keskitalo, Satu-Maarit Frangou and Imran Chohan showed how they used educational design research methods to investigate the use of digital technologies to enhance student interest in reindeer herding studies and careers. Their research highlighted how a connection to working life, a sustainable ecocultural context, motivation and meaningful digital solutions can create a model of vocational Sami pedagogy.

In 'Pupil influence in Swedish compulsory schools, a way of 'learning' and 'living' democracy' Göran Bostedt and Linda Eriksson report on the findings from a study involving four compulsory schools in two municipalities in northern Sweden. This work contrasts the Swedish Education Act stipulation that activities in school must be designed in accordance with fundamental democratic values while many Swedish schools find it difficult to incorporate pupil influence. The study conclusions are that a proactive attitude among teachers towards the participation, engagement and motivation of pupils is an important element in a didactical approach that furthers both the school's democratic goals and its academic goals. Furthermore, it is essential that teachers have a theoretical and practical understanding of democracy and reflect on their own views concerning democracy in relation to the implementation of their teaching.

Our next article is also from Sweden, but it focuses on the experiences of a minority group within the country, namely Tornedalians. In 'Young Tornedalians in education: the challenges of being national minority pupils in the Swedish school system' Pär Poromaa Isling brings to the fore an ethnic minority group who are a national ethnic and linguistic minority group in northern Sweden with their own culture and Meankieli language. The study examined the challenges that young Tornedalians encounter in learning about and practising their Tornedalian status in upper secondary school. Postcolonial perspectives and theories of nationalism were used to interrogate interview data which highlighted the need for teachers to bring minority issues into the curriculum and everyday teaching.

In 'Canadian contexts for exploring transformative student agency through place-conscious pedagogy' through contrasting case studies, Darron Kelly and Sharon Pelech invite us to 'listen and dig into the stories of place' (Piersol, 2013, p. 64) for the learning 'embedded in relationships, culture, family, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, community, land, connections, memory and history' (Government of Alberta, 2017, p. 5). Their article explores the many inter(ra)related facets of agency that a cross-curricular place conscious pedagogy can yield.

Lauri Lantela and Suvi Lakkala have explored the expectations of young people and their parents/ carers in relation to young people's well-being and the school's role in supporting them. In 'The role of comprehensive schools in supporting the well-being of Northern-Finnish young people as perceived by

the young people, parents and carers' they provide the results from a survey of young people, parents and carers in Finnish Lapland. Their research showed that young people saw school as a natural place to receive support for their well-being. The authors call for the development of collaborative, multi-agency school cultures to nurture students' initiative and engagement in order to produce sustainable well-being.

In the feature 'Forced migration and education' by Iryna Kushnir we have a very topical account of education on the move for those who are experiencing education in exile. This account is theorised through the work of Paulo Freire and his seminal work 'The Pedagogy of the Oppressed' (1970).

In the second feature 'Digital open badge-driven learning - a doctoral thesis summary' Sanna Brauer summarises her PhD which was the first in Europe to investigate digital open badges and digital open badge-driven learning. The work explains a novel application of descriptive statistical methodology in educational research. A useful definition of the digital open badge-driven learning process is provided, and it is grounded on competences and includes learning materials, badge criteria, instructional badging, scaffolding and peer support.

At what is a very opportune time during the Covid-19 pandemic with lockdowns and many education buildings closed, Donna Dey has provided a book review of The Impact of Mental Health and Wellbeing on Effective Learning and Teaching: A practical guide for those responsible for learners (volumes 1 and 2) edited by Hugh Smith and Amanda McGrandles. She highlights how the book has the potential to help teachers become more intuitive when managing complex situations and through sharing good practice, identifying common challenges, educators can arrive at appropriate solutions for supporting young people in their schools.

As Arundhati Roy (2020) argues, the pandemic is a possible departure point - a portal - to a better, kinder future. Some of the blueprints laid out in this issue of the journal, whilst not complete nor perfect, serve as very good departure points to ensure that this opportunity means we do not return to what was previously perceived as 'normal' but instead work towards greater participation, diversity, involvement and engagement in education, locally and globally, with all stakeholders.

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