

Doi: 10.26529/cepsj.1678

## Editorial

The second issue in volume thirteen of the CEPS Journal is devoted to thematically diverse papers and is not a focus issue. It includes contributions by fifteen authors from six different countries: Bangladesh, Germany, Indonesia, Jordan, Portugal and Slovenia. The papers discuss a range of areas in education, including the context of anti-racism and anti-discrimination at five major universities in Canada, the level of self-reported peer victimisation at Slovenian universities, the issue of literacy policy in Southeast Asia, how Project-Based Learning is integrated into pre-service teacher education programmes in Portugal, and how geometry should be taught in primary school mathematics classes. The issue also features three papers dealing with problems in education caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, which were accepted for publication some time ago and, as recently accepted papers, were available online while waiting for an issue number. Although Covid-19 does not seem to be an important issue in education anymore, the papers have been included in this *varia* issue and represent a significant contribution to our understanding of the management of various crises in education, including those in the future. The issue concludes with a book review.

The paper by Muhammed Muazzam Hussain entitled *The Policy Efforts to Address Racism and Discrimination in Higher Education Institutions: The Case of Canada* reviews existing policies related to anti-racism and anti-discrimination at five major universities in Canada and assesses the equity initiatives undertaken by university authorities to promote greater access and inclusion of different ethnic minority groups. The findings reveal that, although the universities have some sort of anti-racism and anti-discrimination policies to combat racism and discrimination in their educational setting, they face challenges or limitations in adopting holistic and inclusive measures for the different ethnic and diverse minority groups studying there. The study argues for promoting discussion and responses to specific policies, programmes and practices, including behaviours and attitudes for combating racism and discrimination in institutional and professional contexts. The findings may be helpful for academics, policymakers and administrators to develop their understanding of institutional racism, identify challenges and adopt policy measures to address the issue.

The next paper, *Science Teachers' Practices During the Pandemic in Portugal* by Mónica Baptista, Estela Costa and Iva Martins, examines how science teachers adapted their practices to the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and what they learned during the period of confinement. The authors conclude that

adjustments were made in the design and management of classes. Synchronous classes were held using digital platforms and other communication infrastructure, experimental distance activities were implemented and online courses based on a television programme were taught. In addition, in order to enable distance learning during the period of confinement, teachers developed pedagogical skills using technological skills.

The third paper, *Project-Based Learning in Initial Teacher Education: The Practice of Three Higher Education Institutions in Portugal* by Tiago Tempera and Luís Tinoca, examines how Project-Based Learning is introduced into pre-service teachers' education programmes. The participants were three higher education institutions located in different regions of Portugal, all of which offer initial teacher education programmes for primary school teachers that include Project-Based Learning at some point. The data were collected through document analysis of the programmes' curricula, as well as through semi-structured interviews with the programme coordinators in each institution. The results show that the institutions value Project-Based Learning and try to include it in their programmes, whether in theoretical, didactical or practical terms. However, they encounter some difficulties in promoting more significant experiences that would enable students to feel confident enough to use this strategy in their Supervised Teaching Practice internships.

The next paper is from the field of mathematics education. *Geometry Teaching in Transition: An Investigation on the Importance of School Geometry in Primary Education* by Ana Kuzle investigates how geometry lessons have been re-evaluated due to a paradigm change and have consequently been attributed new meaning within the mathematics curriculum worldwide. The paper focuses on this paradigm shift in the sense of an evaluation of the extent to which both the didactical potential and the practical value of geometry instruction in primary education are currently recognised and utilised by primary grade teachers. A total of 120 primary grade teachers participated in the study. The author concludes that there has been positive recognition of the didactical potential of school geometry by teachers over the previous two decades, but, for various reasons, there has nonetheless been a lack of actual implementation in school practice. As well as being discussed with regard to the latter, the results are also interpreted in terms of their theoretical and practical implications.

The purpose of the fifth paper of this *varia* issue, *Retrospective and Concurrent Victimisation as Predictors of Social Self-Concept and Loneliness in First-Year University Students* by Katja Košir and Urška Žugelj, is to investigate students' current level of self-reported peer victimisation and perceived peer support, as well as their retrospectively reported victimisation, as predictors of

their social self-concept and loneliness in their first year of university. A total of 200 first-year university students (26% male) participated in the study. The results indicate that retrospectively reported victimisation experiences during their years of schooling explain additional variance in social self-concept and loneliness beyond the students' concurrent peer experiences. According to the authors, these findings indicate that experiencing victimisation during school years could have consequences for students' wellbeing that are not limited to the period of primary and secondary schooling, but can persist after their transition to university.

The sixth paper, *Literacy Policy in Southeast Asia: A Comparative Study between Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia* by Evi Fatimatur Rusydiyah, Zaini Tamin AR and Moh Rifqi Rahman, examines the literacy policies in Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia and discusses the strategic policies to improve literacy in each country. The qualitative comparative research method was employed to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the literacy policies in these three countries. According to the findings, Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia each have distinct literacy policy trends. The context of each country's education system and language affects the government's literacy policies: Singapore emphasises industrialisation, Malaysia refers to its multi-ethnic life and Indonesia reflects the 2013 curriculum.

In the seventh paper, entitled *Teachers' Attitudes towards the Rights of Students with Special Education Needs During the Covid-19 Pandemic*, the author Mohammad Sakarneh deals with educational problems related to the Covid-19 pandemic and aims to assess teachers' attitudes toward the rights of students with special needs during the pandemic. The study focuses on the attitudes of special education teachers regarding their self-efficacy and beliefs about using e-learning with their students during the Covid-19 lockdowns. It was undertaken using a quantitative research approach in which teachers working with children with special needs in Amman were interviewed virtually. The findings indicate that the teachers have positive attitudes and perceptions regarding the rights of children with disabilities, although they report having low self-esteem. The teachers emphasise the need to find ways of integrating e-learning for special needs children during the lockdowns and report that teachers in Jordan have relatively negative perceptions of using e-learning platforms for teaching children with disabilities. The author concludes that there is a need for policies to train and support teachers in these settings in order to equip them with the skills required to work with students with special needs using e-learning tools.

The last paper is by Slovenian authors Melita Puklek Levpušček and Mojca Poredoš. *Difficulties in the Close Social Relationships of Slovenian Students*

*during the Covid-19 Pandemic* also deals with the difficulties experienced by Slovenian upper-secondary school and university students aged 18 to 25 in their close social relationships during the Covid-19 pandemic. The authors examine the extent of social difficulties in six domains (relationships with friends, establishing a new relationship with an intimate partner, sexuality, relationship with a current intimate partner, parental control and living with parents, and family conflict) in the pre-pandemic period and in the first two waves of the pandemic. They were also interested in whether demographic variables were related to the students' perceived social difficulties. The results show that the severity of the reported difficulties increased in all six domains during the government-imposed quarantine periods, with relationships with friends and the opportunity to establish new intimate relationships being the most affected.

This edition concludes with a book review prepared by Žan Korošec, who evaluates a textbook on statistical methods entitled *Še ena knjiga o statistiki: Univariatne in bivariatne statistične metode v edukaciji* [*Another Book on Statistics: Univariate and Bivariate Statistical Methods in Education*] published by Založba Univerze na Primorskem in 2021 (ISBN 978-961-293-101-8).

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