

EDITORIAL

From Imagine to the Real: IJEP

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Editor

Greetings to All Colleagues, Friends, and Readers

I am gladly informing you that we have taken a long way as expected. I would like to thank all my colleagues making the journal possible and promising. Readers will see that this issue has a lot of strong articles in terms of critical pedagogy and problems of educational practices. We are venturing to deal with the problems of education critically and open a new gate to *dialog* and *praxis*, in a Freirean way.

A new journal, especially emerged in a region which is outside of the western centers may be regarded suspiciously, especially the journal which its inducers take critical theory and radical/critical pedagogy into their perspective as leading light. Firstly the authors trusted to a comparatively new and refereed but at the same time *non-indexed* journal, yet. We are overrating for their scientific and critical efforts.

As the founding editor, I am also thankful to new advisory board members. Many top notch scholars accepted our invitation to journey and they stood with us. Thanks to Peter Mayo, Michael Apple, Peter McLaren, Henry Giroux, Antonia Darder, Carmel Borg, Natalia E. Jaramillo, Susan Robertson, Daniel Schugurensky, Jerrold L. Kachur, Mary Darmanin, and other colleagues accepted to be a part of Advisory and Editorial Board from the beginning. Some of them served as referee in this issue. We know that they are hardworking scholars; they are caring “oppressed” people of the world, fighting against to oppression and discrimination arising in different types. Some young scholars have joined our venture as team members and also with their studies on educational policies. They gave hope to us. In the mean time, I should mention young scholars Tarik Soydan and Turgay Alakurt. They took a lot of jobs. Tarik has served as assistant editor and Turgay committed to the technical problems and arrangements. The message rain was not able to be managed without their help. In the next issues we hope that the Journal will find a stable technical frame with reliable *free software of Open Journal System*. Also a lot of friends served as reviewers deserve a eulogy and appreciate for all their meaningful supports. A special thank also goes to Peter Mayo from University of Malta. He nominates some advisory board members and

also he shares his personal time in very late nights in front of computer by messaging. In these conditions we have tried to do our best for all of our friends from different parts of the world.

In this issue we have six articles. The articles focus on teaching, teacher and school level issues, critically.

Jaramillo and McLaren's article has been excerpted from their in-print studies. Their paper focuses on the aspects of teacher education critically. Their critics bring us some little known but mostly disregarded concepts such as *social positivism*, *actuarialism*, *adiaphorization*, *imaginary images* etc.. Jaramillo and McLaren remind the neoliberal times' concrete fact for education and warn us by their words;

What occurs in many of our classrooms is the *transmission of information*, not the *production of knowledge*, and still less the *production of meaningful knowledge*. Students will often resist those knowledges that demand argumentation and critical discussion, since it distracts them from the kind of meansends rationality that will get them ahead within the high-stakes testing system and, similarly, teachers will often resist teaching meaningful knowledge because they are pressured to teach to the multiple choice tests in this selfsame predatory world of teaching.

In the article Jaramillo and McLaren are digging the contradiction between the understandings of "imaginary" and "real" in a capitalist consume society. They follow analysis of the Wilden on Imaginary and mentioned one more times that : *"the problem with the Imaginary of equal opportunity in capitalism is that it consequently obscures the structural limitations and boundaries that condition human activity in social institutions, such as schools. Rather than drawing attention to the social organization and social relations between and among different actors in the education, the Imaginary of capitalist democracy reproduces the belief that academic failure is largely the result of individual characteristics."* Authors continue their debate by following Dewey's thought related with imaginary of capitalist society, in particular USA, and they access perspective for critical teacher education. In the study Jaramillo and McLaren encouraged all "to become critical educators".

Faitar's article titled "Unity in Diversity: Is there a common denominator?" based on a qualitative study. It focuses on multiculturalism and diversity, especially on moral values and religious context. Author summaries the purpose of this paper such as: although we might be from different cultures, societies, and religions, a set of core moral values still applies and it is trusted in our everyday individual lives. Particularly, the research topic was formulated to understand how this set of core moral values is perceived by individuals from different religions and cultures. Their views and opinions are investigated through the qualitative research technique employing a survey offered to exponents of four major religions: Hindu, Islam, Christian and Buddhism.

Ongaga and Ombonga's study, titled *From Ruined Hopes to Great Expectations: Strategies for Educating Vulnerable Girls in a Center of Excellence, Kenya*, is a hope story for a number of girls from Kenya. The purpose of the research was to examine strategies used in the Center to educate and empower girls, whose backgrounds are characterized by poverty, HIV and AIDS and retrogressive cultural practices including female genital mutilation (FGM) and early marriages.

The article utilizes a Gender Responsive Model to examine the strategies. Data was drawn from interviews with students, teachers and administrators, document analysis as well as participant observation. As the readers we have been awarded from the findings of the article that the synergistic strategies integrated in a gender responsive pedagogy that Center employs, *Tuseme* (Let's Speak Out), the rescue center, and reconciliation and sensitization programs.

The next article titled “*Ubuntu* and Peacemaking in Schools” has written by Msila who is from University of Johannesburg. The paper mentioned the reports incidents of violence, drug abuse, bullying and hate crimes happening within the schools in South Africa. In the case study article focus is on a primary school introduced a programme of peace education and *ubuntu*, described as an African worldview of humanism. Msila thinks through his study and shares with us that “some African-based models such as *ubuntu*, combined with other ‘universal philosophies’ can help in curbing or minimizing violence in educational institutions such as schools.

Mosothwane, from University of Botswana, shows us how conceptualization can be important in teaching to teacher in the paper titled “A Study of Science Teacher Trainees’ Conceptualization of Immunological Processes”. As the words of Mosothwane;

The most widely accepted procedure for examining conceptual understanding is the interview technique. Conceptual understanding helps teachers to identify conceptual errors and to correct misconceptions that students may possess. Furthermore, conceptual understanding encourages teachers to teach students scientific concepts for understanding. Teachers who adopt a model of conceptual change in their teaching would help learners to ‘talk and explain’ biological concepts. In addition, conceptual understanding helps learners to learn scientific concepts relationally, that is learners would relate biological concepts to everyday life activity and consequently meaningful learning would be achieved. Therefore, there is a need to promote a deeper understanding of subject matter knowledge and to make teachers more competent. However, if teachers possess misconceptions, they would influence what is taught in schools and it is likely that they would perpetuate the same misconceptions to students.

I have noticed the connection between the articles of Jaramillo and McLaren’s and Mosathwane’s, as the authors of this special issue of IJEP. They debate and concern on “learning without sense of reality”, encourage teaching not for high stake testing, or not learning by memorizing. They touch a different part of the reality with a sense of learning and teaching with understanding deeply.

We concluded this issue with the paper titled “Teachers: Being the Light in the Tunnel” by Szlizewski who is from Western Carolina University, USA. Szlizewski argues on democratic ideals for a school society and how a student learns best. Szlizewski summarizes her paper as;

... speaks to changing schoolhouses and classrooms into micro democratic societies through the creation of a positive and student-centered learning environment rather than the more common traditional system more based on myopic vested interests and questionable empirical data decisions. This essay also forwards the ideal of a more democratic classroom that helps each student learn to learn at all levels of Bloom’s taxonomy through active use of knowledge and engagement. Finally, this essay encourages each educator to enhance the learning that goes on in each classroom by becoming more focused on how each student learns best, through daily and on-going

assessment, rather than what each student learned through the use of grades, quizzes and tests.

I wish to send my thanks to all of colleagues for their valuable input to IJEP, once more. We hope their supports to continue. Also, I would like to make an open call for solidarity to all colleagues and readers of IJEP who feel themselves a part of struggle for a just and better education and better life for all. Without their solidarity, our journey for “another world” will be harder than it should be!

In solidarity.

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