

## Celebrating 10 Years of the *Global Education Review*

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This year marks the 10th anniversary of the *Global Education Review*. As the founding editor, I have been invited to write a brief editorial commenting on the milestone. Thus, I have an opportunity to reflect on how it started, the efforts and achievements of the current team of editors, and to look forward to topics about challenges facing education around the world, which will supply material for discussion in future issues.

It is a source of pride to be asked, which is pleasant, but it is surprising to me that this journal survived for these past ten years, because when it began, without any institutional support, I had no idea what it was going to be about.

Ordinarily, you don't begin a project until you know what you want to do. But in 2012, Alfred Posamentier, then the Dean of the School of Education at Mercy College, suggested that I begin a journal. With no idea of what I was agreeing to, I agreed. Obviously, creating a new journal would not be possible without the complete commitment of the School of Education faculty. At Al's suggestion, I announced my intention at a faculty meeting. They liked the idea, and with the enthusiastic endorsement of the faculty, we began.

We began with no clear idea of what to publish, no name for the journal, and no knowledge of how to publish online. Yet, began we did. But begin what?

After that meeting, a then new faculty member, Patrick McCabe, formerly associate editor at *Reading and Writing Quarterly*, offered to help. He said that for some time he had wanted to do a comparative international policy-oriented journal. "Policy Makers" would include practitioners in the field to get a real world feel of what was going on in education in various countries. His idea resonated with me. Now we knew what we would publish.

Next, we needed a name. The faculty suggested various names for the journal, all of them including the word "Mercy" in the title. None were deemed acceptable. Mercy College was a small college, and for the international journal envisioned, a name that suggested something larger was required. One of my early supporters was Bruce Cooper, world renowned professor of the policy and economics of education at Fordham University. One day at lunch he asked, "What's it going to be about?" After a brief explanation, he suggested the title, *Global Education Review* (GER). Now we had a name for the journal. Sadly, Bruce passed away this year but his belief that, "Quality education is a fundamental human right, not a privilege," lives on in the articles that GER publishes.

How to publish? The Public Knowledge Project at Simon Fraser University (SFU) in Canada supplied the software. The developers of the software answered questions and offered to publish it for a fee. So, we turned to the very helpful faculty of SFU's program in Print and Digital Publishing for answers and some

suggestions. And so, with Eric Martone volunteering to be co-editor, we began to prepare for the first issue.

Two years later, we had acquired an international advisory board of well-known academics, developed a mailing list for initial distribution that comprised 3,000 education faculty at 200 research universities around the globe, and obtained commitments from over 100 faculty at major institutions to review articles within their fields of expertise. Then we published the first issue.

One of my earliest supporters, Erwin H. Epstein (Emeritus) at Loyola University Chicago, a founder of the Comparative and International Education Society, provided a kick-start by allowing access for GER to send announcements to the CIES membership list, 4,000 at that time. But even with the best distribution, open-access journals that don't charge authors a fee for publication, and with no institutional support, don't survive for ten years without a committed editorial team.

GER is lucky to have a committed team. The four editors, Eric Martone, Helge Wasmuth, Roseanne Vallice Levy, and Elena Nitecki have continued to work to publish GER while teaching and fulfilling their increasing administrative responsibilities as Mercy College transitioned to become Mercy University.

Over the ten-year period, distribution continued to increase, and databases began to take notice: First was Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) of the U.S. Department of Education. An email and phone call came to ask if we would grant permission for GER to be indexed in ERIC. Next was Cengage. Would we grant permission for Cengage to include GER in the databases that they sell to libraries and institutions worldwide? Today,

according to World Cat, GER is indexed in more than 600 libraries worldwide, and ERIC reports that GER content is downloaded from its database about 6,000 times in every six-month period. As for evidence of academic impact, SCISPACE reported that GER's more than 220 articles have received over 1,550 academic citations. Faculty now publishing in the journal for promotion and tenure include academics from major universities around the world.

A new initiative of the current team, which should expand the reach and influence of GER, is to co-sponsor academic events that coincide with its themed issues. The first of these international webinars—*Why does Froebel matter in the 21st century?*—was hosted on Zoom in May 2022 by the Froebel Trust (London) and Mercy College (New York). The event corresponded with “Finding Froebel: National and Cross-National Pedagogical Paths in Froebelian Early Childhood Education,” a two-part issue (nos. 1 and 2 in 2022). Speakers included Teresa K. Aslanian, University of Southeastern Norway (Chair); Maria Cooper, University of Auckland (New Zealand); Jan-Erik Johansson, Professor Emeritus, Oslo Metropolitan University (Norway); Nicola Kemp, Canterbury Christ Church University (England); Christina MacRae, Manchester Metropolitan University (England); Cecilia Marion-Puntarelli, Indiana University (United States); Lynn McNair, University of Edinburgh (Scotland); Helge Wasmuth, Mercy College (United States); Tansy Watts, Froebel Trust and Canterbury Christ Church University (England).

Congratulations to the current team of editors for their amazing accomplishments!

Looking forward to the next few years, it seems to me that the need to provide an international perspective on the challenges that will face education is greater than ever. By

providing a global perspective, GER will provide an advantage to policy makers and practitioners in countries around the world. What follows are examples of topics that should be of interest.

### **1. Quality of Instruction and Covid-19**

The quality of instruction continues to be an issue in countries around the world and the effect of COVID-19 on the education of children may have a lasting negative effect on the income of the children and the economic well-being of the nation. Post pandemic truancy (chronic absenteeism) increased from 26% in the 2017-2018 school year to 66% in the 2021-22 school year. An analysis of government data from Johns Hopkins University reported in *Fortune Magazine* (*Fortune*, 2023) indicated absenteeism has increased in elementary and middle schools, as well as in high schools.

According to *The New York Times*, progress in reading and math was set back by two decades, with the most damaging effect on poorer children (*The New York Times*, 2023). Such losses will result in lower lifetime earnings for the children and be a drag on the economy of the nation. What is being done internationally to make up for the learning losses resulting from the pandemic? The answers will differ from country to country, as the challenges vary. But a comparative approach can provide opportunities for one nation to learn from what another finds useful.

### **2. Immigration and Immigrant Populations**

Immigration and immigrant populations will continue to provide challenges to governments in North America, Europe, countries of the Persian Gulf and Aisia, and not only on our southern border. Children of immigrants face difficulties, including poverty, discrimination based on race and social class,

and language barriers. These difficulties are often associated with lower educational achievement, social isolation, and limited access to health services. What is being done in schools by governments to mitigate the problems that these children face? The approaches will differ according to the needs and economics of the nation and one nation can learn from successful approaches tried in another nation.

### **3. Academic Achievement**

Academic achievement continues to be an area of concern in all countries as they compete economically. The United States is concerned, for example, that achievement in reading and mathematics has been in a long-term decline (NCES, 2023). A related issue is the role of standardized testing in measuring achievement and charges that tests are unfair to minorities. Would less obtrusive methods yield different results? What programs and approaches to evaluation are being tried in countries around the world that appear to hold promise for better results. An advantage of an international perspective is that one nation can learn from what neighbors are doing and adapt policies to meet these challenges.

### **4. The economics and Financing of Education**

The economics and financing of education continue to be a challenge to governments around the world. The relationships between the funding of quality schools and educational achievement are complex, and the role of family and social class cannot be overestimated. For example, in the United States, declines in post-secondary education caused by cuts in government funding fall most heavily on black high school students as they tend to be more from low-income families. Human capital theory suggests that

universal education is good for the individual, for communities, and for the nation (Becker, 1975). The need for a solution is apparent. What percentage of gross domestic product should be invested in education? Can private schooling and home schooling provide supplements to public funding, or do they cause other problems? How different countries answer these questions is an area ripe for investigation.

Looking forward to the next ten years, as GER continues to publish quality international research and increase its circulation, hopefully, decision makers will take notice of the empirical evidence reported to implement evidence-based programs and policies that guarantee both equity and solid foundations for the children of their nations.

## References

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