

Association for Childhood Education International
– Hong Kong and Macao

Education Policy, Reform, and School Innovations in the Asia-Pacific Region

Edited by

Ramsey Ding-Yee Koo
Ben Cheong Choi
Maria Rita Lucas
Tak Cheung Chan

EDITORS

Ramsey Ding-Yee Koo, *Association for Childhood Education International – Hong Kong and Macao*

Ben Cheong Choi, *Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong*

Maria Rita Lucas, *Centro Escolar University, Philippines*

Tak Cheung Chan, *Kennesaw State University, USA*

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Foreword

Robert C. Morris
Professor of Educational Leadership
University of West Georgia, Georgia, U.S.A.

In an era of what has witnessed rapid globalization and lifelong education there still exists those who would turn the educational clock back to an over-simplified program of the three R's, a few literary classics, strictly chronological history, and mathematics and science geared to countering foreign trade competition. It is good to have a volume such as this devoted to education's crucial interdisciplinary problems. The field of international education studies linked to global cultures of the Asian-Pacific region provides a vital link to human understanding and survival.

In international education studies for today's educators two necessities converge: the need to develop language communication, and the need to develop understanding of common educational practices and priorities. International education studies embrace several types of programs: studies of world languages and communication systems, innovations and technological break-through that affect educational practices, and the role of educational progress and reform.

This volume represents one of the first serious attempts to foster better understanding of international education issues and practices in the Asian-Pacific region. A variety of approaches currently being used, as well as those being reformed are discussed in this publication. The reader will find descriptions of quite different programs from those found in the United States, but programs and approaches that have great merit for the communities they serve. If all the authors of this text were brought together I would suspect that they would defend their varying perceptions of the preferable roles of local and state authorities, as well as school personnel and even professors, and would debate each other warmly. Such varying perceptions are to be expected in an emergent field in which educators of good will are trying to find their way to sound international education programs. The readers of this volume will also find accounts of experiences in teaching in the Asian-Pacific region. They too see many things differently.

In this volume, the readers will also find factual information which should be helpful to those developing programs of international education studies in their own bailiwicks. Described are understandings and interpretations of current practices and relevant approaches. Likewise many resources for preparing educators for similar situations, as well as extensive listings of selected readings are available.

I applaud this volume's editors, Ramsey Ding-Yee Koo, Ben Cheong Choi, Maria Rita D. Lucas, and Tak Cheung Chan for their diligence and persistence in identifying recent and meaningful approaches that are "dramatically" changing (reforming) the educational landscape of the Asian-Pacific region. You should find their samplings in the field of international education studies as reported in this volume a stimulus to your own independent thinking about what are essential ingredients for sound educational practices. That authors of good will differ as well as agree on approaches is all to the good. In international education studies there are many good roads that lead to Rome.

Notes on Contributors

Gennievie R. ADA

Gennievie R. ADA is a graduate of Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Bachelor of Science in Business Management, and Master of Arts in Childhood Education. She worked as a full time preschool teacher and a part-time college professor at Miriam College, Philippines. Her research, *Preschoolers' Verbal Interaction and Letter Identification Skill: Television Cartoon Characters as Visual Aids*, was awarded during the President's Awards for Research in Miriam College in 2006. She presented the study at the Philippine Association for Graduate Education seminar held in Our Lady of Fatima University, Valenzuela City. She is currently completing a writing workbook for Filipino preschool children.

Sarah AI-JURAIID

Sarah AI-Juraid is a special education teacher at a pre-K through 3rd grade elementary school in Madisonville, LA with the St. Tammany Parish School Board, U.S.A. Sarah teaches reading to 1st through 3rd grade students in a resource setting. She is also a parent advocate and the mother of 3 children, one of whom is autistic.

Karen Taylor BACKOR

Karen T. Backor is an education instructor at Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas, U.S.A. She is interested in the role of ritual in promoting a sense of classroom community and character development. She has conducted a project dealing with classroom ritual as part of a doctoral collaborative research.

Danilo M. BAYLEN

Danilo M. Baylen is Associate Professor of Media and Instructional Technology at University of West Georgia, U.S.A. His current research interests include technology integration across the P-12 curriculum, online learning and teaching strategies, and instructional design and development initiatives. He is actively involved with the Association for Childhood Education International, Association for Educational Communications and Technology, National Writing Project, and the annual Technology, Colleges and Community (TCC) worldwide online conference.

Titus BROWN

Titus Brown is a bilingual-math teacher at Kocurek Elementary in Austin, Texas, U.S.A. He is interested in the role of ritual in promoting a sense of classroom community and character development. He has conducted a project dealing with classroom ritual as part of a doctoral collaborative research.

Shing Kun CHAN

Shing Kun Chan is Assistant Professor of Department of Educational Psychology, Counseling and Learning Needs at Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong. His recent publications are two book chapters: "From routine practice to innovation: An example of a creative thinking curriculum in a Hong Kong primary school" (2007) in *Fostering Creativity and Effectiveness of Teaching* and "The attributional analysis of creative teaching" (2007) in *Adolescent Development and Creativity*. His research focuses on creativity in education, child development and learning.

Tak Cheung CHAN

Tak Cheung Chan, Professor of Educational Leadership, Kennesaw State University, U.S.A., is a former school teacher and administrator in Hong Kong. For fifteen years, he held responsible administrative positions at the district level of Greenville County School District, South Carolina, Cobb County School District and Gwinnett County School District, Georgia, U.S.A. He also served as a faculty for seven years at the educational leadership departments of Valdosta State University and Georgia Southern University, USA. His academic interests include educational planning, school facilities planning, school business management, and international education.

Christine CHEN

Christine Chen is the Founder President of the Association for Child Care Educators (ACCE) and the Founder and President of the Association for Early Childhood Educators-Singapore (AECES). She has been advocating for professional development and learning for educators for 20 years. Dr. Chen served as a member of the Child Care Personnel Accreditation Committee with the then Ministry of Community Development to look into accreditation matters as well as development for the whole profession. She is also a member of the Early Childhood Education Advisory Committee, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Singapore. Her interest lies in coaching and mentoring teachers and their leaders in promoting reflective practice and change.

Ben Cheong CHOI

Ben C. Choi is Assistant Professor of the Department of Early Childhood Education and Deputy Head of the Centre for Early Childhood Research and Development, Hong Kong Institute of Education. Dr. Choi formerly served as Lecturer at the Faculty of Education, Macao University, Department of Educational Planning & Administration, Hong Kong Institute of Education and Senior Officer at the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau, Macao. His research interest is on teacher education and education administration and policy. Recent studies include education and support programmes for newly arrived and/or cross-border students from the Mainland, sense of self-efficacy of kindergarten principals and national identity of pre-primary pupils. Dr. Choi has been a consultant to the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau, Macao on education and youth affairs projects since 2003.

Kathleen FITE

Kathleen Fite is professor of education at Texas State University, U.S.A. She is interested in the role of ritual in promoting a sense of classroom community and character development.

Karen K. FOSTER

Karen K. Foster teaches literacy related courses at the University of Central Missouri, U.S.A. She is currently Association for Childhood Education International Executive Board as the Member-at-Large #1 (2007-2010). Research interests include documenting speech patterns of pre-service teachers, improving the reflective portfolio process, and enhancing self-awareness through electronic video critiques.

Xiaodan HUANG

Xiaodan Huang is Professor of Education at the Department of Teacher Education of Shawnee State University, Ohio, U.S.A. Her research interests range from teacher education policy to multicultural education. For the past eight years, she has been involved in the English language immersion project in China, visiting the immersion schools, observing teaching, and developing curriculum for the project.

Yukiko INOUE

Yukiko Inoue is Professor of Educational Psychology and Research in the School of Education, University of Guam. Inoue is also Head of the Educational Research and Technology Department. Her research interests include interdisciplinary studies on student learning and development, educational technology for diverse learners, improving university teaching and learning, and social contexts and learning in higher education. Inoue is the co-author of *Teaching with Educational Technology: The Case of the Asia-Pacific Region*, and the editor of *Technology and Diversity in Higher Education: New Challenges, and Online Learning for Lifelong Learning*. She is also a poet and the author of *Roses, You Must Be*, and *The Window That Reveals Tomorrow*.

Marilyn N. Malloy JACKON

Marilyn N. Malloy Jackson is Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education at the University of Guam where she is responsible for teaching practice, pre-service, in-service courses, and research activity at the undergraduate and graduate levels. She is Advisor and Program Coordinator, and former Director of the Early Childhood Infant/Toddler and Preschool Demonstration Laboratory Centers. Her research interests are in emergent reading and literacy development. She is engaged in publishing Children's Literature, and writing local Culturally Responsive Books for young children. Since 1970, Dr. Jackson has trained and prepared hundreds of teachers and child care providers in Guam and the Pacific Region. She is the founder of *the Guam Child Care and Development Association*. Her interest in professional development for educators and her long time passion for young children's learning earned her the University of Guam 1998 and 2004 Faculty Award for Excellence in Service.

Binbin JIANG

Binbin Jiang is Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership of the Bagwell college of Education at Kennesaw State University, U.S.A. She has over 20 years of experience in teaching and educational administration. Her research and publications are in the areas of teaching English as a second/foreign language, multicultural education, international education, professional development in cross-cultural contexts, and action research.

Putai JIN

Putai Jin works at School of Education, the University of New South Wales, Sydney 2052, Australia. He has published his research in the areas of quantitative methods, motivation, psychophysiology, language learning, and personality in *Psychological Bulletin*, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *American Behavioral Scientist*, *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, and *Journal of Sport Behavior*. He is the author of "Human Factors" and contributes chapters to a number of books.

Ramsey Ding-Yee KOO

Ramsey D. Y. KOO is the Founding and Past-President of the Association for Childhood Education International-Hong Kong and Macau (ACEI-HKM). He was a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Educational Policy and Administration (1997-2005) at the Hong Kong Institute of Education, Director of Educational Research Center at the University of Macau (1992-1995), and Director of Mathematics and Science Program (1980-1986) at Lincoln University in San Francisco, California, USA. He is co-editor of six books about education development and curriculum reform in Hong Kong, Macau, and mainland China, visiting professor at the Georgia Southern University in 2003, and currently serves as Co-Chair of the ACEI-HKM Publication Committee, a reviewer of the Journal of Basic Education, and volunteer worker for the San Francisco School Volunteers Program at the John Muir Elementary School. His research interests include education policy and curriculum innovation, teacher professionalization, school and community partnership, rural education, multiculturalism, language issues, educational philosophy (existentialism, Confucianism & Buddhism), cross-national and comparative methods, mathematics and astronomy education.

Percy Lai Yin KWOK

Percy L. Y. Kwok is International Consultant in IT Education and Private Tutoring. His past professional tasks include interim evaluation of IT education policy for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government, web administration of several international associations in Comparative and International Education and sustainable establishment of an inter-school, cross-country web-based learning platform at primary and secondary levels in Hong Kong, China, Singapore, United Kingdom and the United States of America. In 2004-2007, Dr Kwok was Principal of an innovative IT continuing education center called Pui Ching Education Centre for training some high school leavers to become IT assistants in Hong Kong schools. His main research focuses on student co-construction of new knowledge through electronic portfolio and related electronic leadership contexts in cross-regional perspectives (one recent publication in *Encyclopedia of Multimedia Technology and Networking*, Second Edition), demand-supply mechanism of private tutoring in basic education and lifelong learning policy in Asia-Pacific rim.

Yuk Ching LAI

Y. C. Lai is a lecturer in the Department of Early Childhood Education at the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Her research and professional practice interests focus on early childhood education, and special education. Her most recent publication is "Early Intervention Programme for Young Children with Special Needs in Hong Kong" (2007) in the *Hong Kong Journal of Early Childhood*.

Richard LAIDLAW

Richard Laidlaw works in Stockland, Sydney, Australia. He received his Bachelor of Education and Master of Education (Research and Adult Learning Majors) at University of Technology, Sydney, and then completed his Doctor of Education degree in 2004 at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. He was also awarded a Churchill Fellowship. He worked as Manager VIC & TAS, Australian Student Traineeship Foundation (Government Agency in Education Management Industry) and Senior Manager, Learning & Development in Ernst & Young (Partnership). Currently, Dr. Richard Laidlaw is General Manager HR "C Retail in Stockland. His research interests include School to Work initiatives and effective learning processes.

Titus, Siu Pang LI

Titus S. P. Li is a PhD student in education at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam in the Netherlands. He was born in China, bought up and educated in Hong Kong and the United Kingdom. He had extensive teaching experience in primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong before taking up the teaching post in the Faculty of Education, University of Macau in 1993. He then managed a primary school for two years in Hong Kong. In 2003, he returned to Macao working in the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau. His most recent publication "Reform and Challenges of Mathematics Education at the Primary Level in Macao" (2007) is in the *Journal of Basic Education*. His research focuses on primary mathematics education, comparative education, teacher education and student abnormal behavior.

Renae LOW

Renae Low works at School of Education, the University of New South Wales, Sydney 2052, Australia. Her publications are in the areas of text editing, modality, problem solving, and self-concept in *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *American Journal of Psychology*, *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, *Instructional Science*, *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, and *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*. She is a contributing author of "Handbook of Multimedia Learning" and other books.

Maria Rita D. LUCAS

Maria Rita D. Lucas is Associate Professor of Psychology and Early Childhood Education at Centro Escolar University, the Philippines and Executive Vice President of the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) in the Philippines. She is actively involved with ACEI-USA, British Association for Early Childhood Education and National Association for the Education of Young Children. Also, she is an owner-directress of Mary's Road Center for Development and Learning, a Manila-based progressive pre-school. As technical committee member in the Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED), she is involved in formulating policies and standards for early childhood teacher education.

Robert C. MORRIS

Robert C. Morris, Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of West Georgia, is a former middle and secondary school teacher. He has held professorships at the University of South Carolina, Northern Illinois University and Auburn University. He has been a Dean of Education at the University of Indianapolis and a Department Chair at Georgia Southern University. His primary teaching responsibilities include: Human Resources Management and School & Community Relations. His main research interests are focused on curriculum development and innovative instructional programs. He has most recently been investigating youth at-risk, discipline issues, and school violence.

Leslie A. OJA

Leslie A. Oja is a health educator and executive director of her consulting firm with a specialization in the social, emotional, and physical challenges of children. Her current research on the global effects of stress, trauma, and violence on learning and health especially with challenged children was brought to the attention of Save the Children-UK where she is a committee member advancing this issue. She is also recognized by the Inter-Agency Network For Education in Emergencies (INEE) and the Women's Commission for Refugee Women & Children. She has published in major journals on topics related to education and healthcare.

Judith H. PATTERSON

Judith H. Patterson is Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at Kennesaw State University in the U.S.A. She worked as a public school teacher and school administrator for more than thirty years, the last eleven of which she served as a personnel administrator for a large suburban school district in Metro-Atlanta. Her research interests are related to areas of leadership development of school leaders, particularly as related to personnel and staff development. Program development in higher education is another area of concentration.

Bayram PEKOZ

Bayram Pekoz works at Girne American University (GAU), North Cyprus. He received his Bachelor of Education in English language teaching from Gazi University, Ankara, and his master's degree (1996) and doctoral degree (2001) in language teaching at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. Dr. Bayram Pekoz has been Head of ELT Department at GAU since 2004. His research interests include second language teacher education, communicative language teaching, task-based learning, computer-assisted language learning, curriculum evaluation, and SL motivation. His research has been published in *GAU Journal of Social and Applied Sciences*, *ITL Review of Applied Linguistics*, and other reputable journals.

Gail Frances REYES-GALANG

Gail Frances Reyes-Galang is a doctoral student in Child and Family Studies at Miriam College Graduate School, Philippines. She is currently the principal of Miriam College Grade School and former chair of the Childhood Education program in the same college. In 2005, she received the Miriam College President's Award for Outstanding Research for her study about academically gifted preschoolers. She is also involved in training government daycare teachers using the developmental-interactionist approach.

Michael D. RICHARDSON

Michael D. Richardson is the Hibernia Endowed Professor of Educational Leadership and Head of the Department of Educational Leadership and Technology at Southeastern Louisiana University, U.S.A. He previously held faculty and administrative appointments at Western Kentucky University, Clemson University, Georgia Southern University and Mercer University. He completed bachelors and masters degrees in Education at Tennessee Technological University and was awarded the Doctorate of Education from the University of Tennessee. Dr. Richardson served as Founding Editor of the *Journal of School Leadership*, Editor of *The Journal of At-Risk Issues* and Founding Editor of *Contemporary Issues in Educational Leadership* and *The Mercer Journal of Educational Leadership*. He has authored/edited fourteen books, published more than one hundred articles in professional journals, and made more than one hundred and fifty presentations to regional, national and international professional organizations. Dr. Richardson served as a secondary and elementary principal, Personnel Director, Director of Special Projects, Coordinator of Federal Programs, and Assistant Superintendent before entering higher education.

Ria Deomampo SANCHEZ

Ria Deomampo earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology, major in Microbiology in 1997 at the University of the Philippines at Los Baños and obtained her Master of Arts degree in Childhood Education from Miriam College on March 2008. She has been an educator since 1997 and has taught from preschool to college level. She was a volunteer teacher in Bamban, Tarlac under Ugnayan ng Pahinungod UPLB in 1997 and a coordinator, trainer and teacher for preschoolers in Gawad Kalinga sites in Laguna in 2001-2005. Ria Deomampo is now an instructor at the Department of Human and Family Development Studies College of Human Ecology, University of the Philippines, Los Baños. She is also the teacher-in-charge of the pre-kindergarten class of the laboratory school of the department, a trainer of daycare workers of Laguna and a host of a local radio program of the university that focuses on families and child development. Ria Deomampo is a member of PECERA–Philippines Chapter, ACEI-Philippines and HUMEIN Philippines.

Rowena SANTIAGO

Rowena Santiago is Professor of Instructional Technology with the College of Education, and Founding Director of the Teaching Resource Center (TRC) at California State University, San Bernardino, CA, U.S.A. As TRC Director, she develops, organizes and implements faculty development programs that support faculty in their teaching innovations and strategies. Her current research activities include faculty readiness for online teaching, use of technology for course transformation, and the role of learner characteristics in e-learning among students in the U.S. and Japan.

Vidya THIRUMURTHY

Vidya Thirumurthy is Assistant Professor of Early Childhood and Elementary Education at Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA, U.S.A. She holds the elected office of Secretary and Treasurer of the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) for 2008-2011. Her primary research areas include cross-cultural comparisons of early childhood and elementary education, and socio-cultural contexts for teaching and learning. She has authored and co-authored numerous articles in professional journals. She currently serves on the publication committee of ACEI.

Amor Q. De TORRES

Amor Q. De Torres is Professor at the College of Education at Capitol University in Cagayan de Oro City, the Philippines, where she is also the Director of the Office for Education Development and Linkages. She was formerly Dean and Associate Professor of the College of Education and the Graduate School of Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro City for 11 years (1996-2007). She is the Chair of the Technical Panel for Teacher Education of the Commission on Higher Education and is the representative of the Mindanao Teacher Education Institutions to the Teacher Education Council of the Department of Education. She has worked with the Indigenous Peoples and the Muslims for Peace Education since 1996.

M. Barbara TRUBE

M. Barbara Trube is Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education at Ohio University, Chillicothe Campus, Ohio, U.S.A. Her research interests include supervision, evaluation and professional development in teacher education and curriculum development and assessment in early education and care programs. She has been involved in an English-language immersion (EI) project in China for the past seven years.

Charles WANG

Charles, Xiaoxue Wang is Assistant Professor of Instructional Technology at Georgia State University, Georgia, U.S.A. He is currently a board member and the Regional Coordinator for Asia and Pacific Region in the International Division of Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) and the Director of Research and Public Relations for Society of International Chinese in Educational Technology (SICET, 2006~2008). In China, Wang has taught English in a middle/high school and at a university. From 1994-1999, he served as Associate Professor at the Intensive Language Training Center of Sichuan University. His research interests include designing on-line learning and training environments, instructional technology consulting, and technology integration in school environments.

Tricia Kwok Sai WONG

Tricia K. S. Wong is Assistant Professor in the Department of Early Childhood Education, Hong Kong Institute of Education. She is also the Programme Leader of Faculty of Education Studies at the institute. Her research focuses on educational administration and teacher training. Her most recent publications are “The development and professional training of early childhood education in Hong Kong”, “A case study of leadership of kindergarten principals in Hong Kong”, “Coping style, stress preparation, and depersonalization in beginning kindergarten teachers” and “Job-related stress and social support in kindergarten principals: The case of Macau”.

Timothy Wai Wa YUEN

Timothy W.W. Yuen serves as Assistant Professor in the Educational Policy and Administration Department of the Hong Kong Institute of Education. His recent publications on political education can be found in *Compare* and *Citizenship, Social and Economics Education: An International Journal*. His research interest focuses on civic education and sociology of education.

List of Blind Reviewers

Dr. Wai Hing Cheuk, Open University of Hong Kong

Dr. Putai Jin, University of New South Wales, Australia

Dr. Ho Cheong Lam, Hong Kong Institute of Education

Dr. Kai Ming Li, Hong Kong Institute of Education

Dr. Yiu Chun Lo, Hong Kong Institute of Education

Dr. Rosita L. Navarro, Centro Escolar University, Philippines

Dr. Tunde Szecsi, Florida Gulf Coast University

Dr. Yan Wang, University of Macau

Dr. Edwin, King Por Wong, Hong Kong Institute of Education

Dr. Ting Hong Wong, Academia Sinica, Taiwan