Working Together to Improve Education: Highlights from CJNSE and CCGSE Collaboration

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For the third consecutive year, The Canadian Journal for New Scholars in Education (CJNSE) and the Canadian Committee of Graduate Students in Education (CCGSE) have collaborated to produce a Special Issue showcasing the innovative work of Canada's graduate students in education. The authors featured in this issue developed their articles from their roundtable and poster presentations at the 2024 CCGSE/CSSE conference. This issue aims to support graduate students in extending the reach of their education research by providing them with a platform where their work undergoes a rigorous peer review process.

This Special Issue highlights a diversity of research foci and approaches among new education scholars in Canada. and showcases the meaningful and valuable research outcomes graduate students achieve across various fields. In particular, the research topics in this Special Issue highlight collaborative approaches in education. Discussing collaboration within and between stakeholders (such as teachers, department leaders, or administrative groups) is helpful in framing when considering who has the agency to make the educational change. The perspective of shared responsibility and community-mindedness may shift how educational conditions and research are approached.

Inclusion is a central theme in this collection of articles. Like collaboration across groups, the authors' conclusions highlight strengths that can emerge from a full-student approach to different topics in educational contexts. The recommendations for educational leaders (such as increasing their awareness of individual student experiences) and the recommendations for research (such as increasing the use of qualitative methods to understand experiences) could lead to a more inclusive climate in the education field.

In This Issue

This 2024 Special Issue includes eight articles:

Rosheedat Adeniji contributed a literature review entitled *Organizational Learning in Schools: The Antecedent and Moderating Factors*. Adeniji synthesizes literature to identify various ways researchers have conceptualized organizational learning in education, as well as the antecedent and moderation conditions. The review emphasizes the importance of various types of leadership, including principal and departmental leadership, in cultivating the conditions that promote organizational learning and cooperation.

Martin Ako, Oluwatoyin Imisoluwa Jegede, and Shamnaz Arifin Mim contributed a literature review entitled *Towards Equity for Students and Teachers of Colour: Insights into Pedagogies, Emotions and Initiatives in Science Education*. The authors review the literature on equity initiatives and pedagogies for students of colour and the role of teachers' emotions in K-12 science education. The authors argue that equity initiatives have gained prominence in education but note that there are varied meanings and understandings of equity that inform how equity pedagogies and initiatives are developed and enacted. The authors conclude by emphasizing the importance of amplifying the voices of racialized students and teachers in understanding equity in schools.

A Katharine Bartlett contributed a research article entitled *"Everyone is Willing to Help Each Other": Collaborative Practices in Nunavut Schools*. Drawing on questionnaire responses from 55 teachers and 14 interviews, Bartlett collected Nunavut educators' stories to understand how they collaborated to provide effective literacy education. Using a collegial relations framework as a lens to analyze the stories, Bartlett found that educators tended to engage primarily in sharing, suggesting that collaboration in Nunavut schools may often lack the depth of joint work. However, Bartlett argues even sharing can be beneficial for teacher learning, and calls for the exploration of new opportunities for collaboration.

Heather Leatham and Lorayne Robertson contributed a research article entitled *Human Rights Policy Examined Through the Lens of Canadian Educators' Policy Intentions*. The researchers report on a critical policy analysis of publications on human rights-related policies in education. The researchers argue that local policies promote rhetoric rather than action, despite human rights being an important part of the Canadian policy agenda for years. The researchers conclude by calling for developing a collective understanding of the

rights to full personhood of students, teachers, and school leaders to advance human rights in Canada.

Sarah McAllister contributed a position paper entitled *Conceptual Confusion: Identifying the Optimal Conceptualization of Resilience for Higher Education Students*. In the face of inconsistent conceptualizations of resilience, which may hinder resilience programs, McAllister highlights the need to identify the most beneficial conceptualizations to support student learning and success in higher education. McAllister examines three primary conceptualizations of resilience—i.e., resilience as trait, process, and outcome—and argues that the process-oriented conceptualization is most suitable for informing the development of resiliency programs. Based on a literature review, McAllister calls for holistic biopsychosocial-informed approaches to support the conditions that facilitate the resilience process in students.

Jade Oldfield contributed a research article entitled *Inclusion (In)Action Within the Province of Alberta*. Using a document analysis method to analyze publicly available documents, Oldfield assesses how Alberta school divisions implement inclusive education practices defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Oldfield identifies promising practices in some school divisions and highlights important gaps, including outdated guiding documents on inclusive education. Oldfield concludes with key recommendations for supporting inclusive education more consistently across Alberta, including using qualitative research methodologies to identify and address policy and practice gaps.

Hui Xu contributed a research article entitled *Phenomenological Insights into Small Talk: A Co-Cultural Analysis of Chinese Graduate Students in Canada*. Based on data from a phenomenological study, Xu uses co-cultural communication theory to identify the communicative strategies employed by three Chinese graduate students in Canada who encountered ongoing problems with small talk in English. Xu found that all three followed a non-assertive separation communicative orientation and used communicative strategies of avoiding, maintaining barriers, and leaving the situation. Xu concludes by recommending that universities support international students' communication and embrace a variety of communication norms.

Marwa Younes contributed a literature review entitled *Has the Concrete Ceiling Cracked Yet? A Systematic Review of the Barriers Faced by Minority Leaders in Higher Education*. Younes synthesized research published from 2017 to 2022 to shed light on issues faced by minority leaders at higher education institutions. Key themes articulated barriers facing

women leaders and racialized leaders, as well as intersectional perspectives. Younes' analysis also illuminates enablers of minority leaders, including mentorship structures and policies. Younes concludes that university policymakers and leaders should consider the unique challenges minority leaders face and leverage enablers to support more inclusive leadership structures.

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Henry Ssali: Henry Ssali holds a PhD in Education from the University of Toronto. His core research interests examine whether policy is loosely managed, and how institutional policies affect street-level bureaucrats in higher education. He holds a master's degree in education leadership and policy from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) and a bachelor's degree in international relations from the University of Toronto.

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