

Research Catalyst(s)

Tannock Hall
The University of Notre Dame Australia
Friday 16 to Saturday 17 August 2024

Program

Time	Activity
Friday 5 pm	HDR and Undergraduate Workshops
Saturday 10.00 – 11.20	Opening Acknowledgment of Country Welcome to The University of Notre Dame Australia Panel Presentation
11.30	Parallel sessions
11.55	Parallel sessions
12.20	Parallel sessions
12.45 – 1.25	Lunch
1.30	Parallel sessions
1.55	Parallel sessions
2.20	Parallel sessions
2.45 – 3.00	Afternoon Break
3.05	Parallel sessions
3.30	Parallel sessions
4.00 onwards	Sundowner Presentation of WAIER Awards

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WAIER Website: <https://www.waier.org.au/39th-waier-research-forum-2024/>
WAIER Archives: <https://waier.org.au/archives/forums/all-forums-index.html>
Forum 2024 abstracts: <https://waier.org.au/archives/forums/2024/abstracts-2024.html>

We wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on, the Whadjuk-Noongar people. We wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this region.

Welcome

This year we warmly welcome you to the 39th WAIER Research Forum, *Research Catalyst(s)*. The WAIER Annual Research Forum is a key activity of the Institute and has run since 1986. The Forum provides opportunities for beginning and established researchers to present their work and build collegial networks with colleagues working across Western Australia.

About WAIER

The key function of WAIER is to advocate for, and promote, educational research across Western Australia. We are a cross institutional organisation, with each of the five Western Australian universities, the Department of Education and Catholic Education represented on the WAIER Executive Committee. By means of collegiality amongst research colleagues, WAIER aims to strengthen a culture of collaboration among higher education institutions, government and private sectors and their research staff.

In collaboration with other Australian IERs, WAIER supports educational researchers through publication in our well-respected online journal, *Issues in Educational Research* (IER).

Our vision is to “Encourage and engage in educational research to inform and influence policy and practice”. This is achieved through four strategic pillars:

Inform – disseminate evidence-informed research to local, national and international audiences.

Engage – collaborate with educational researchers, practitioners, policy makers and research organisations.

Encourage – provide support and opportunities for early, aspiring and established researchers.

Influence – shape educational policy and practice.

By utilising these four strategic pillars, WAIER continues to raise the profile of Western Australian educational research and helps drive policy towards better outcomes.

Website address: <https://www.waier.org.au/>

Forum photographs

Please note that photos will be taken during the Forum and may be put on the WAIER website as part of the record of the 2024 Forum. If people have any objection to their photos being used in this way, they need to ensure that they contact a committee member at the Forum to make their wishes known.

Participants are requested not to take photos of *PowerPoint* slides during presentations. This can be disruptive to the presenter and participants and could be a breach of copyright.

Presentations of Awards

WAIER Postgraduate Awards 2024

The Western Australian Institute for Educational Research presents a number of Postgraduate Awards annually. The aim of these Awards is to recognise excellence in postgraduate student research in the field of education. The Faculty, School or Department of Education from participating WA universities selects an outstanding student researcher to whom this prize will be awarded.

Dr Sinead Wilson
Curtin University

PhD thesis:
Digital technology use in Western Australian early years centres: The role of directors, educators and parents in guiding young children's engagement with digital technologies
<https://espace.curtin.edu.au/handle/20.500.11937/93975>

Dr Jennifer Moyle
Murdoch University

PhD thesis:
Generating Jennifer – Her story
<https://researchportal.murdoch.edu.au/esploro/outputs/doctoral/Generating-Jennifer---Her-Story/991005609658707891>

Dr Anne-Maree Hays
Edith Cowan University

PhD thesis:
Factors affecting the selection of novels for study in Western Australian secondary English classrooms: Understanding teacher choices
<https://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses/2740/>

Dr Daniel Groenewald
The University of Notre
Dame Australia

EdD thesis:
The characteristics of senior leadership teams in high performing Western Australian Catholic composite and secondary schools
<https://researchonline.nd.edu.au/theses/389/>

WAIER Research Grant 2024

WAIER is proud to offer the annual Research Grant of \$2000. The aim of the grant is to support early career and established researchers who do not have ready access to funds or resources; and/or require seeding funding for new projects for research directly relevant to early childhood, primary, secondary or tertiary education.

Applicants for the WAIER Research Grant

Gregory Hine	The University of Notre Dame Australia
Janene Sproul	Murdoch University
Sophie Karangaroa	Curtin University

The winner of the WAIER Research Grant will be announced at the Forum.

WAIER-Fogarty Foundation Postgraduate Student Research Prize

In 2024 WAIER is pleased to once again partner with the Fogarty Foundation to offer a postgraduate student research prize of \$5000. The aim of the prize is to support educational researchers studying at an approved higher education institution who are conducting research directly relevant to early childhood, primary, secondary or tertiary education.



Finalists for the WAIER-Fogarty Foundation postgraduate student research prize 2024

Stacey Carter	Curtin University
Simon Daniele	Curtin University
Mary Espinosa	Curtin University
Sophia Karangaroa	Curtin University
Violetta Pristel	The University of WA
Belinda Schmolke	Curtin University
Anna Taylor	Curtin University
Tahnee West	Curtin University

For information on previous years' winners of the Postgraduate Awards please see <https://waier.org.au/archives/awards/postgrad-awards-all.html>

WAIER Life Member Award 2024

Fellowships are awarded on the basis of leadership and length of service to WAIER, and contribution to the community of educational research within Western Australia.

WAIER Fellows are invited to submit a portfolio of 10 years active service in WAIER, including a sustained contribution to the leadership and administration of the Executive Committee, participation in the achievement of the objects and aims of WAIER, valued and sustained performance in a management role on the Executive Committee and a significant contribution within the community of educational research in WA. The Award is conferred by unanimous vote of the WAIER Executive Committee.

The WAIER Life member Award will be announced at the Forum.

For details of WAIER Fellows and Life Members from previous years, please see <https://waier.org.au/archives/awards/fellows-lifemembs.html>

Panel presentation

Dr Sonja Kuzich Chairperson

Sonja Kuzich is the Director of Learning and Teaching at the School of Education, Curtin University. She is the President of the Western Australian Institute for Educational Research (WAIER). Sonja's PhD focused on Education for Sustainability in schools. Her publications and conference presentations address the impacts of educational policy, teachers as writers, women in academia, and the impact of nature on children's affective and cognitive outcomes. Sonja is also a co-presenter of a session at this Forum.



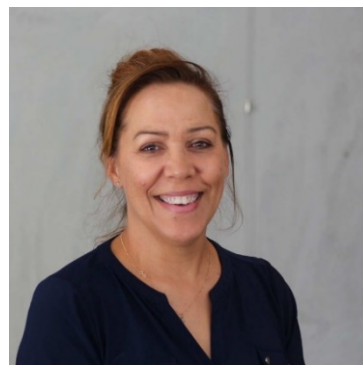
Professor Cheryl Kickett-Tucker Curtin University

Cheryl Kickett-Tucker AM is an esteemed Noongar academic, author, community development practitioner and advocate dedicated to Aboriginal self-determination in Australia. She is a Wadjuk traditional owner who is connected to Ballardong, and Yued people of the Noongar Nation. Cheryl has a distinguished career spanning over two decades in the fields of education, health, and community development.

With a strong academic foundation, Cheryl holds a PhD in Education from Edith Cowan University, where her research focuses on the social and emotional well-being of Aboriginal children and youth. She has directly contributed to her community by translating her research into services and programs for Aboriginal children and young people. Cheryl's dedication to community development is evident through her involvement in various initiatives and organisations. She is the founder and director of Koya Aboriginal Corporation, an organisation committed to empowering Aboriginal communities through cultural, educational, and sporting programs. Her leadership in Koya has been instrumental in creating opportunities for Aboriginal youth to thrive and succeed.

A passionate advocate for Indigenous rights and education, Cheryl serves on several advisory boards and committees, where she influences policy and practice to ensure better outcomes for Aboriginal people. Her work has been recognized with numerous awards and honours, reflecting her tireless commitment to making a positive impact on her community.

Cheryl Kickett-Tucker's legacy is one of resilience, empowerment, and cultural pride. Through her multifaceted career, she continues to inspire and uplift the next generation of Aboriginal leaders, fostering a more inclusive and equitable future for all Australians.



Associate Professor Julian Chen
Curtin University

Julian Chen is a seasoned applied linguist, language educator, and practitioner researcher, who coordinates the Asian Languages Course at the School of Education, Curtin University. Julian's research synergises technology-enhanced language teaching, game-based learning, immersive virtual reality (VR), queering curriculum, and critical and humanising pedagogy. Julian has published extensively in international flagship journals, served as the Book Review Editor of *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, edited the 2021 Springer volume, *Emergency Remote Teaching and Beyond: Voices from World Language Teachers and Researchers*, and authored the monograph, *Second Life as a Virtual Playground for Language Education: A Practical Guide for Teaching and Research* (Routledge). As an ally for gender equity, diversity, and inclusion (GEDI), Julian has endeavoured to transform their innovation of scholarship of learning and teaching (iSoLT) to build social justice in (language) education. Julian's ongoing iSoLT engagement has advanced their scholarly work and promoted partnerships through gender-aware critical pedagogy.



Dr Mathilda Joubert
Sheridan Institute of Higher Education

Mathilda Joubert is Director of Excellence and Innovation at Sheridan and lectures in creativity, school improvement, leadership, management and research methods in both the Faculties of Education and Business. She is currently the President of the Australian Council for Educational Leadership (ACEL) in WA and has facilitated successful school improvement programs in more than 500 schools around the world. Mathilda's expertise in creativity and innovation is recognised internationally across the education, arts, business and voluntary sectors. In 1998 she was appointed Research Fellow to the UK's National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education where she worked alongside Sir Ken Robinson to advise the UK government on the promotion of creativity in education and co-authoring the Committee's seminal report *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education* (NACCCE, 1999).



Professor Greg Thompson
Queensland University of Technology

Greg Thompson is Professor of Education Research at Queensland University of Technology (QUT). His research focuses on educational theory, education policy, and the philosophy/sociology of education assessment, accountability and measurement. More recently he has studied teachers' work and the impact that workload and work intensification is having on the profession. In 2021 he published *The Global Report on the Status of Teachers* on behalf of Education International. Recent books include *The Global Education Race: Taking the Measure of PISA* and *International Testing (Brush Education)* and *Privatisation and Commercialisation in Public Education: How the Public Nature of Schooling is Changing* (Routledge).



Program of parallel sessions

10 AM	Opening: President of WAIER, Dr Sonja Kuzich Acknowledgment of Country Welcome to The University of Notre Dame Australia: A/Prof Gregory Hine				
10.15 - 11.20	Panel Presentation: Chaired by Dr Sonja Kuzich				
	Room 201	Room 202	Computer Lab 203	Room 301	Room 302
11.30	Maria Outtrim Encouraging female teachers to become principals in Catholic composite secondary schools in WA	Ali Hayes & Laura Perry The social and cultural capital of refugee-background students: An Australian case for an 'asset view'	Manal M. Alanazi, Toni Dobinson & Sender Dovchin Language and online identity among Saudi youth	Nikki Fairhurst, Rachel Sheffield & Rekha Koul Experiences of women in STEM: Personal narratives	Carol Carter, Paul Gardner, Sonja Kuzich, Lisa. Paris, Y Sawers & J White "What makes a school, a good school?" Sharing themes, principles and values
11.55	Daniel Groenewald High-performing school executive teams	Liberty Carter, Helen Dempsey & Alison Hilton Building cultural capital with Sub-Saharan African teachers in the Australian education system	Amal Alhajri Online peer feedback in Arabic as an additional language (AAL) writing: Practices and perceptions	Michelle de Kok, Karen Murcia, Geoffrey Lowe & Audrey Cooke The influence of digitalisation on children's creative agency and STEM engagement	Saul Karnovsky Rethinking educator wellbeing: Moving beyond self care
12.20	Samsu Alam The role of principals in developing school-based curriculum in Indonesia: Experiences, challenges, and enablers	Tetiana Bogachenko & Rachel Burke The use of formal and informal learning resources by displaced people from Ukraine in Australia	Julian Chen, Kim Andreassen, Bri McKenzie & Wendy Cumming-Potvin Stop demonising drag: LGBTQA+ inclusive education practices	Keryn Sturrock, Amanda Woods-McConney & Dorit Maor Implementing science inquiry pedagogy in upper primary and lower secondary	Kathryn Dehle, Helen Dempsey, Sandi Fielder, Chad Morrison How school-based teacher educators work between universities and schools
12.45 – 1.25	Lunch				
1.30	Nila Tanzil Using the <i>Room to Read</i> library model on rural schools in the Nagekeo District, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia	Jennifer Moyle Can you be whatever you want? An autoethnographic and pictorial narrative mapping of parameters of possibility	Jodie Sanders An exploration of the effects of extended reality (XR) on creativity in an Australian secondary school context	Mabel Rolt, W Cumming-Potvin & R Bennett Gender (in)equity and women's experiences with STEM leadership in the private sector	Liana Luyt Conditions supporting and maintaining the effective incorporation of the general capabilities of the Australian Curriculum
1.55	Anne-Maree Hays Factors affecting the selection of novels for study in Western Australian secondary English classrooms	Sophie Karangaroa Keep on keeping on: Indigenous self-determination for Noongar and Māori university students	Sinead Wilson Digital technologies in the early childhood sector	Rajeshree Thanapal Factors affecting mathematics teacher beliefs and pedagogical practices when implementing inquiry-based learning	Leonie Menzel & Pauline Roberts Using an "ePortfolio of evidence" to demonstrate achievement of national standards
2.20	Kelly Ilich Investigating teachers' capabilities to provide algorithmic literacy education in Australian schools	Tamara Reads Through dangers untold, and hardships unnumbered: A trip through the ethics approval labyrinth		Belinda Schmolke Positive veteran mathematics and science teachers in WA	Thomas Jones Western Australian public secondary school principals' perspectives on student services teams
2.45 – 3.00	Afternoon break				
3.05	Dwi Suatman Investigating the design and Impact of professional learning and development provided to <i>widyaiswaras</i> in Indonesia	Janene Sproul & Kirsten Lambert University gardens and student mental health		Larysa Chybis Ukrainian migrant teachers' lived experiences of professional transition in Australia	Naqin Xie An arts-based enquiry into the impacts of expert mentoring on beginning arts teacher experience
3.30	Craig Butler Uncovering the depths of VET teacher identity	Una Carrabba Autoethnography as writing practice and research methodology		Stephanie C. Milford, Lynette Vernon, Nicola Johnson & Joseph J Scott Parents as first educators: A mixed-methods study of self-efficacy	Fiona Currey Professional learning as a strategy for empowering teachers to shift classroom cultures to embrace learner agency
4.00 onwards	Sundowner: Post graduate Awards, Early Career Award, WAIER Research Grant, WAIER Fogarty Postgraduate Prize, Fellowship Award				

Program of HDR and Undergraduate workshops

Friday 16th August 2024

4.45 Workshop registrations open	
<p>Undergraduate workshop Room 202 5.00 to 7.00 PM</p> <p>The teacher as researcher: Peering into the future</p> <p>Who should attend?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undergraduate teacher education students and those recently graduated (within the last year). • Students who have conducted research as part of a unit/s in their undergraduate education course and; • Students who are interested in learning more about how to conduct and interpret research. <p>This workshop will introduce undergraduate students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to ways they can use their knowledge of research in their classrooms as a means to improve practice • next steps to doing study at higher degree level • opportunities to share findings of undergraduate research. <p>Facilitated by Dr Maria Outtrim (Curtin University/UWA) and Dr Jian Zhao (UWA) Maria.outtrim@curtin.edu.au jian.zhao@uwa.edu.au</p>	<p>HDR pre-forum workshop 2024 Room 303 5.00 to 7.00 PM</p> <p>How to harness the power of AI responsibly – Tools, tips and techniques: An interactive HDR Workshop</p> <p>Who should attend?</p> <p>The workshop will benefit HDR students who wish to better understand how to utilise AI tools effectively and ethically in multiple areas of their research.</p> <p>Fundamentals of AI: Explore the basic concepts, terminologies, and ethical considerations in AI.</p> <p>AI in research: Learn more about how AI is revolutionising various research domains through case studies and success stories.</p> <p>Hands-on experience: Opportunities for supported practice in using AI tools.</p> <p>Collaborative learning: Engage in peer-to-peer discussions regarding effective AI applications.</p> <p>Expert guidance: Learn from leading AI researchers and practitioners who will share their insights and experiences.</p> <p>Facilitated by Dr Cindy Ann Smith Curtin University cindy.smith1@curtin.edu.au</p>

Each participant will receive a participation certificate for attendance that identifies AITSL standards

Parallel sessions

The abstracts of presentations are set out here in alphabetical order according to the name of the first author. They can also be found on the WAIER archive site at <http://www.waier.org.au/archives/forums/2024/abstracts-2024.html>

A Chairperson will be appointed for each session. The Chair's duties will be to open the session on time, to facilitate questions from the audience in the second half of the session, to ensure that the session finishes on time and to formally thank the presenter.

There is no change-over time between presentations. Presenters need to load their computer files before the sessions begins, i.e., before 11.20 am, 1.20 pm or 2.50 pm.

Abstracts

The role of principals in developing school-based curriculum (Merdeka Curriculum) in Indonesia: Experiences, challenges, and enablers

Samsu Alam

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This study examines the important role of school principals in the development of the *Merdeka Curriculum* which is a significant educational reform in Indonesia. Merdeka requires principals to develop a school-based curriculum with consideration of their school's unique characteristics and students' context. Utilising a perspective of critical policy sociology (Looney, 2001), this study deploys a critical discourse analysis (Luke, 1995; Liasidou, 2008; Wodak, 2011) within an explorative multisite case study (Cohen, 2017) to examine the experience of principals and key stakeholders across six primary schools in two regions in Indonesia. Data collected includes document analysis to examine the global and local influences in determining curriculum development policy in schools, and semi-structured interviews examining the practices, challenges, and enabling factors encountered while designing the curriculum. Data was thematically analysed using the Qualitative Analysis Guide of Leuven (QUAGOL) (Dierckx de Casterle et al., 2011). The initial findings highlight some of the socio-political influences and resource constraints and suggest the need for collaborative and contextualised approaches to curriculum development. By exploring the intersection of global educational trends and local educational needs, this research provides insights into the effective practices and systemic support needed for successful curriculum development.

Language and online identity among Saudi youth

Manal M. Alanazi

Curtin University and Northern Border University, Saudi Arabia

Toni Dobinson and Sender Dovchin

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This study investigates how a student attending a public university in Saudi Arabia constructs her online identities through translanguaging, and examines the impact of online language practices on her identity formation. It employs an ethnographic research design and adopts qualitative data collection and analysis. The data was gathered through the social media platform (X) and a semi-structured interview with a Saudi youth at one university in

Saudi Arabia about her usage of these platforms. Online data was analysed using an online transtextual analytic framework, and the interview was analysed thematically.

This study is important because it sheds light on the online communication practices of a student at a Saudi Arabian university, which is of particular interest to sociolinguistic and applied linguistic researchers. The results demonstrated how the participant constructed distinct identities by utilising a variety of language repertoires as well as other web-based semiotic resources like emojis. Emojis, Standard Arabic, English, code switching between Arabic and English, and a regional variety are among these repertoires. According to one of the main findings the participant depended more on the regional variety than any other variety. Another finding is that English is rarely used and standard Arabic is only used for posts associated with religion. Additionally, the participant employed emojis in ways and contexts that differed from those reported in earlier research.

Online peer feedback in Arabic as an additional language (AAL) writing: Practices and perceptions

Amal Alhajri

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Educators strive to use new technologies to help with students' learning processes. However, despite all the changes that have occurred in recent times, teaching Arabic as an additional language (AAL) has not received the same attention as English, especially in the use of technology in teaching AAL. This research seeks to investigate AAL adult students' practices when giving and receiving online peer feedback (by Google Docs) on AAL writing and explore students' perceptions about using online peer feedback in AAL writing. The study explores the topic using an instrumental case study design with data collected through two semi-structured interviews, observations, and students' written essays. This study's findings have potential to help learners of an additional language master more effective Arabic writing skills and assist language teachers to choose appropriate feedback strategies in the online classroom space. There is also the possibility of supporting AAL curriculum design and development, where technology in teaching writing is strategically incorporated.

The use of formal and informal learning resources by displaced people from Ukraine in Australia: Educational capital and 'exchange rates' in (re)settlement

Tetiana Bogachenko

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Rachel Burke

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Education — both formal and informal — is a fundamental human right, key to individual and community-level health, economic sustainability, and social and (trans)cultural engagement. While previous research has examined the challenges of pursuing education in the context of migration and (re)settlement, the value of education as capital and the complexities of converting this capital in emergency international displacement has received scarce attention. Our pilot study with displaced people from Ukraine who arrived in Australia after February 2022 explored their uptake and use of both formal and informal learning resources and opportunities. In this presentation, we discuss how highly educated and qualified displaced people employ these learning resources to complement, convert, and activate their educational capital when (re)settling in a new country. We explain how participants' patterns of utilising both informal and formal learning resources in Australia are neither linear nor homogenous and are subject to multiple adjustments along the way. We found that while there was no lack in learning resources available, their practical value in terms of capital conversion or activation was not immediately clear for these displaced people, and a range of informal and self-directed learning options were used to explore these educational 'exchange rates'. Importantly, in our participants' experiences, a more

accurate and timely informational guidance was needed to turn education into a valuable asset in (re)settlement.

Uncovering the depths of VET teacher identity

Craig Butler

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The Vocational Education and Training (VET) teachers of today find themselves in a complex educational environment with multiple priorities and agendas impacting their sense of self and identity. Foremost among these is consideration of professionalisation of the VET teacher workforce through increasing the minimum VET teaching qualification. However, I argue that the ability to study the identity impacts on the VET teaching workforce of any given educational intervention is limited by the simplified VET teacher identity construct of “dual professional”. To move beyond this limited conceptualisation, this study asked, how does VET teacher identity develop and change over and beyond a vocational career into a VET teacher career and what role does professional/occupational learning play? In this qualitative PhD research study, I interviewed 25 VET teachers employed in public and private Western Australian Registered Training Organisations (RTO). The interviews focused on (a) the participant’s journey up to and including their current role as a VET teacher, (b) significant individuals in their life course, and (c) their views on increasing the minimum VET teacher qualification. This presentation summarises the identity findings in terms of Esteban-Guitart and Moll’s (2014) (a) practical, (b) institutional, (c) geographic, (d) cultural, and (d) relational funds of identity, as well as Butler’s (2017) historic funds of identity, and provides insight into the complexity of VET and broader teacher identity.

Autoethnography as writing practice and research methodology

Una Carrabba

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The teaching of Aboriginal literature in Western Australian High Schools has become increasingly prominent with explicit mention in the English curriculum of “Exploring the interconnectedness of country/place, people, identity and culture in texts including those by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors” (ACELT 1806). However, teachers often feel a lack of preparation and confidence in their knowledge about Aboriginal experiences and cultures. While much has been researched about the underrepresentation of texts which embody and value Aboriginal ways of knowing, doing and being in the curriculum, there is little written about how secondary English teachers can develop empathetic connections with the texts they are teaching as a way to build empathetic connections in their students. It is proposed that by drawing on parallel narratives in their own lives through autoethnographic writing, teachers may be able to assist students to construct empathetic connections with texts themselves. This presentation will focus on the process of collecting data and writing autoethnography as part of a PhD research project.

“What makes a school, a good school?” Sharing themes, principles and values for successful schooling

**Carol Carter, Paul Gardner, Sonja Kuzich, Lisa Paris,
Von Sawers and Jia White**

Curtin University

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This paper reports on a research project where the elements of successful schooling in an Aboriginal primary school context was explored. The research was undertaken in partnership with the principal and staff of the school. Partnership with this regional school

community was conducted in a genuine and ethical manner to avoid “the plethora of ‘best practice’ quick fixes languishing in shiny government documents” (Burgess, Tennent, Vass, Guenther, Lowe & Moodie, 2019). Yarning was an important component of getting to know research participants and understanding the school context. The paper identifies the themes, principles and values as potential aspects that can be shared with other schools, not with a view to being prescriptive, but rather with a view to informing practice and initiating dialogue. Part of the presentation will be in the form of a research-based theatre performance. The video serves as a creative and engaging method to illustrate key findings and insights from the project and where different voices can be brought to life.

From recruitment to retention: Building cultural capital with Sub-Saharan African teachers in the Australian education system

Liberty Carter, Helen Dempsey and Alison Hilton

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What does migration politics have to do with education? How might culturally diverse teachers impact the teaching and learning cultures in Australian schools? What happens if teachers do not identify with the system? Teacher attraction, recruitment, and retention in the Australian education system are in focus at a time when Australia is experiencing a critical labour shortage. Meanwhile, recent shifts in politically charged immigration policies and changes to education policies and curriculum are transforming the Australian school landscape. Despite the diversity of the populations in Australia and Australian schools, the teaching workforce does not reflect this diversity, with teachers from Sub-Saharan African backgrounds being particularly under-represented. This mixed-methods study explores the unique perceptions of these teachers regarding the challenges, barriers, and opportunities they face within the Australian education system. By examining their lived experiences, the research aims to understand how these factors influence their perceptions and participation in shaping school culture. The study follows a multi-dimensional conceptual framework and employs a sequential explanatory research design, allowing for an in-depth exploration of relational realities in critical multicultural spaces within Australian schools. This research contributes to a better understanding of the experiences of Sub-Saharan African migrant teachers, with the goal of informing strategies to enhance their attraction and retention and fully leverage their cultural capital. It is hoped that the insights gained will aid in developing policies and practices that foster a more inclusive and supportive environment for all educators, thereby enriching the educational landscape in Australia.

Stop demonising drag: LGBTQA+ inclusive education practices

Julian Chen, Kim Andreassen and Bri McKenzie

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Drag story time, also known as drag story hour, has been a welcome addition to selected libraries and schools across Oceania, North America and the United Kingdom. What should be an open safe space for drag artists to read children’s books that may involve LGBTQA+ characters or subject matters has instead seen a small but loud group protest and violent threats to performers and event organisers. Throughout this presentation we will emphasise the integral role drag story time has in enhancing children’s literacy and social awareness around inclusivity and empathy. Using queer, transgender, and feminist theory, this presentation seeks to discuss the current affairs of drag story time as it relates to LGBTQA+ human rights. Exposing ourselves and our inner queerness through drag, this presentation will detail how we aimed to counter ‘dragphobia’ by shedding our daily lives and exploring our drag selves. We want to celebrate gender and sexual diversity in educational settings and ‘spill the tea’ on further exploration of queer inclusivity across

social, cultural, and political intersections, with the intent to promote LGBTQA+ inclusive education practices.

Ukrainian migrant teachers' lived experiences of professional transition in Australia

Larysa Chybis

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Australia is often seen as a promised land by migrants arriving at its shores in pursuit of a better future for themselves and their families. However, migrant professionals frequently encounter daunting challenges when trying to secure employment matching their competencies. This research explores the obstacles Ukrainian migrant teachers experience when transitioning into the Australian professional environment and the means to overcome them.

Five Ukrainian migrant teachers who obtained their degrees in Ukraine or another post-Soviet country and whose main professional activity constituted teaching in secondary and tertiary educational institutions were selected via a non-probability purposive snowball sampling for the project. The research employed a narrative study as a methodological approach. The data were gathered during narrative interviews supported by memos, artefacts and documents and processed through thematic analysis. Thus, major themes and codes were identified as part of retelling the metastory.

The project aims to portray Ukrainian migrant teachers' professional transition in Australia, underscoring the importance of cultural diversity in educational settings. The research seeks to advocate policy changes to streamline both qualification validation and employment for current and future migrant teachers. It will also benefit other migrant teachers facing comparable professional hurdles on their professional pathways in Australia.

Professional learning as a strategy for empowering teachers to shift classroom cultures to embrace learner agency

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A quarter into the 21st century, and education systems are still grappling with the changes needed to prepare students to thrive in the 21st century. In the wake of exponential advancements in technology and global issues such as climate change and human conflict, calls for education to develop learners who can enact agency, both in learning and in life, continue (OECD, 2018). This requires a culture shift away from teacher-centred classrooms, towards teachers working in partnership with students to engage them as agents of their learning.

This study examines the role of professional learning in empowering teachers to make the changes required to develop agency as a culture within their classrooms. Peer coaching is a model of ongoing professional learning with the capacity to empower teachers to implement change, increase motivation to make choices and decisions, and develop ownership of the change (Robertson et al., 2020; Showers & Joyce, 1996). A mixed-methods research design allowed for insight into teachers' perspectives on peer coaching as a strategy for making the changes required to implement agency, and the nature of these changes.

Examination of peer coaching as a strategy to address issues of empowerment of teachers in the process of change, makes a contribution to practices that support engagement of learner agency. Insights into teachers' experiences of making specific adjustments to practice to engage learner agency, contributes both to research on strategies to engage teacher agency in situations of change, and further understanding of 21st century teaching practices.

The influence of digitalisation on children's creative agency and STEM engagement

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Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAMs) are valuable sources of informal learning for young children, particularly in STEM education. However, in an age of increasing digitalisation, there is a need for GLAMs to incorporate digital elements into their exhibits to promote emerging twenty-first century thinking skills such as creativity. This research examines the potential for digital interactive exhibits to stimulate young children's creative agency within a STEM focused GLAM such as a Science Discovery Centre (SDC) and explore the effectiveness of current exhibits in the SDC in stimulating creativity in young children.

How school-based teacher educators work between universities and schools: Teaching performance assessments as boundary objects

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For some time in Australia, there have been concerns expressed from the political sector about the high rate of burn-out in early career teachers and the teacher shortage that currently exists in Australia. In response to political pressure regarding these concerns, Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership sought to ensure that graduate teachers were effectively prepared to manage academic and practical demands of their early teaching career, by introducing a teaching performance assessment (TPA) into the course accreditation framework. Subsequently, it was mandated for Australian teacher education programs to include a TPA as a summative, capstone assessment of students' achievement in relation to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

To date, research relating to school-based teacher educators' experiences of the TPA process has been limited. Understanding this space is significant because school-university partnerships underpin the effective preparation of pre-service teachers to manage the complexities of teaching. However, there is not always a willingness for school-based educators to process and transfer knowledge about teacher preparation across school and university boundaries. Our qualitative research explored the perceptions of school-based educators through semi-structured interviews, enabling participants to share their experiences when engaging in the delivery of the TPA. Findings identified the TPA as an influential boundary object with potential to shape school-based teacher educators' practice on either side of this boundary.

Analysis was conducted by use of constructs drawn from Carlile's work on boundary objects (2002), to examine the meaning (semantics), language (syntax) and practice (pragmatics) in relation to the movement of school-based educators across boundaries between the university and school to engage with TPA. In engaging with the assessment, participants demonstrated a willingness to transfer knowledge and action between university and school and back again and were proactive within the TPA. Implications include enhanced awareness of the influential nature of school-based teacher educators in driving initiatives within initial teacher education and strengthening the outcomes.

Experiences of women in STEM: Personal narratives illustrating the fluidity and nuances of the STEM pipeline

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Rapid advancements in technology have resulted in a worldwide drive to enhance STEM workforces to remain internationally competitive and ensure economic prosperity. Despite this, there is an ongoing debate about the best strategies for promoting STEM literacy and building national STEM competencies. Women continue to be underrepresented within the Australian STEM workforce, impacting Australia's national performance and STEM pipeline figures. Several factors have been determined as crucial components effecting a female's perceptions of the STEM fields, and their drive to pursue employment in these areas. One method for analysing these factors is to explore the personal narratives of women in STEM and STEM-related fields to determine which factors impact their engagement with STEM. This research contributes to this ongoing debate by providing insight into the personal narratives of eight women who participated within the STEMInist Community of Practice (CoP) research project, and their fluid experiences of the STEM pipeline. This paper explores the key factors and experiences of the participants, including how their careers progressed over time; and related potential solutions for increasing the number of women in STEM. Additionally, this paper explores the criteria for being considered a 'STEM professional', and how this impacts the fluidity of the STEM pipeline for women. This research utilised a qualitative narrative research design through the worldview of interpretivism and employed a storytelling methodology. Thematic analysis was undertaken, and four key themes emerged: Influence, Perception, Self-Perception, and Community of Practice. The research questions are answered through a series of vignettes that provide a rich conception of participant experiences. Key recommendations from this paper are the development of further Communities of Practice to empower women within the STEM fields and to adjust the criteria of STEM professionals to include STEM educators to address this related pipeline issue.

High-performing school executive teams

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Schools and school systems often prioritise leadership development for individuals over teams. A typical system middle leaders' program gathers leaders from various schools to impart leadership knowledge and skills they must apply individually upon returning to school. However it is challenging for those leaders to share their new knowledge broadly across the school. Would it have been more impactful if the middle leaders were trained in the teams they lead? Likewise, principals are often the focus of individual leadership reviews despite their senior leadership teams' significant role in leading the school. This paper argues that we need to form and develop leaders more often in team settings so that they can foster a shared understanding and common language about leadership. Drawing from my qualitative doctoral research on the characteristics of senior leadership teams in Catholic secondary and composite schools, this paper outlines an evidence-based approach to enhance team effectiveness. The study identifies 12 characteristics of effective teams and four factors that can derail team performance.

The social and cultural capital of refugee-background students: An Australian case for an 'asset view'

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This study proposes a more nuanced understanding of the elements constituting refugees' cultural and social capital to help education providers and policymakers develop a non-deficit view of refugees. Such an understanding, informed by empirical research, ought to shape the type of support that is offered to this cohort to facilitate successful participation in higher education. This paper deploys the concepts of cultural and social capital, habitus and field as articulated within Bourdieu's theory of practice. The findings of this study favour an 'asset view' of refugees within the higher educational context. Using a qualitative research design, 20 participants who come from a refugee background were interviewed. It

was found that cultural identity and embeddedness within community has a varied influence on the higher educational experience of people from a refugee background in Australia. Additionally, diverse learning environments and, even, generic support structures, help provide a positive higher educational experience for refugees. These findings complement current research suggesting that people who come from a refugee background possess a range of cultural and social capital which can be assets to their higher educational endeavours.

Factors affecting the selection of novels for study in Western Australian secondary English classrooms: Understanding teacher choices

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The study of novels is a core component of the Secondary English curriculum in Western Australia. Apart from the Year 11 and Year 12 Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Literature courses of study, there are, however, no officially mandated reading lists in Western Australian Secondary English courses. English teachers are free to choose novels that they feel best suit the needs of students and the demands of the curriculum. Despite this freedom, there is concern that the range of novels selected for study is increasingly narrow. Anecdotal reports, informal surveys and media commentaries suggest that teachers frequently choose books with challenging themes, confronting levels of realism and bleak depictions of the future.

This mixed methods research sought to examine the novel selections made by Secondary English teachers, and to understand the factors that influence their selections. The project employed survey methods, semi-structured interviews and an experimental component testing responsiveness to anonymised novel descriptors. Participants were 39 practising Secondary English teachers. The teachers were asked to identify novel selections and reflect upon possible influential factors in their novel selection decisions. The results indicate that teachers attempt to make considered decisions about novel selections, weighing text characteristics, curricular factors, contextual limitations, and practical matters, as well as student interests, but that it may be challenging to integrate these often-conflicting demands. The results suggest that despite the challenges, the novel remains an important text type in Secondary English in Western Australia and one which Secondary English teachers see as beneficial in contributing to the rhetorical, aesthetic, and ethical development of students.

Teaching algorithmic literacy: Investigating teachers' capabilities to provide algorithmic literacy education in Australian schools

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As algorithms continue to rapidly proliferate throughout our society in powerful ways, particularly within social media platforms and AI chatbots, many concerns have been raised, including the effects on critical thinking, social cohesion, privacy, and mental wellbeing. In order to mitigate these concerns, it is essential that algorithmic literacy is taught throughout our schooling system in an equitable manner. This literacy empowers students to understand how algorithms work, recognise their impacts, and develop the skills to navigate a data-driven world thoughtfully.

For this to happen, it is necessary that teachers themselves have adequate algorithmic literacy and the ability to teach it to their students. Teachers were invited to complete an online questionnaire to gather both quantitative and qualitative data on their current understanding of algorithmic concepts, their confidence in teaching these concepts, and the challenges they face. This data-collection is still on-going and will be followed up by semi-structured interviews next year.

The results of this questionnaire reveal key insights into teachers' preparedness and highlight areas where additional support and professional development are needed. These findings, which will be discussed in detail during this presentation, provide a foundation for developing targeted interventions that can enhance teachers' algorithmic literacy.

Western Australian public secondary school principals' perspectives on student services teams

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This study explores Western Australian public secondary school principals' perspectives on student services teams. While research indicates principals play a role in the sustained use of effective programs and practices and affect school climate, the existing literature does not provide an understanding of the perspectives of secondary school principals on student services teams. This interpretivist qualitative study explores principals' perspectives. It has potential to identify areas for improvement in leadership approaches, staff collaboration, and resource allocation.

Adopting an interpretivist paradigm for this proposed study is appropriate as it will explore the interaction between the principal and the student services team, through the experiences of principals in their social context. Moreover, the study provides an opportunity to establish guidance for school leaders on effective ways to form, implement and evaluate student services teams.

This research will be conducted in Western Australian metropolitan and regional Department of Education schools. Semi-structured interviews will be employed to gather data that will be analysed using thematic analysis and a flexible interpretative approach suitable for qualitative data analysis.

Keep on keeping on: Indigenous self-determination for Noongar and Māori university students

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This presentation looks at the experiences of Noongar and Māori university students in Boorloo (Perth), on Wadjuk Noongar Boodja. Building upon works by Indigenous authors such as Behrendt (2002), Smith (1999, 2016), (Fredericks (2015, 2022), Nakata (2011) and Uink (2019), the study explores how these students manage their Indigeneity in the white spaces of a Western academic setting. The research highlights the goals and dreams of Noongar university students and will be shared through film and a written thesis. Using participatory action research (Benjamin-Thomas et al. 2018), which involves researchers and participants working together to understand a problem and develop solutions, and autoethnography (Whitnui 2013), a method where researchers use their own experiences as data, the study follows a Kaupapa Māori approach (Smith 2003) that centres and respects Indigenous perspectives. Early results show themes of intersectionality, negotiating cultural identity, and staying connected to their communities. A five-part documentary series will share how these students show self-determination and define success on their own terms.

Rethinking educator wellbeing: Moving beyond self care

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Teachers and school leaders experience highly emotional working lives. Our educators are toiling away as security guards, counsellors, data administrators, co-parents, citizen makers and babysitters for the neo-liberal capitalist economy. Many educators would describe their work as emotionally 'fatiguing', 'draining' and 'exhausting'. Only recently have we begun to publicly acknowledge that educators are struggling under the weight of unrealistic expectations and mounting responsibilities of modern education environments. In Australia there is a national shortage of staff at all school levels whilst universities struggle to hold onto those learning to teach. Current approaches to educator wellbeing tend to focus on individualised strategies of workplace self-care. This approach is misguided and does not address the unmanageable work conditions and safety concerns of these professionals. This presentation will focus on the research and evidence that is currently shaping teacher (ill)being. We will explore concepts and theoretical tools to better understand the problem, such as how demoralisation is different from burn out, emotional labour, toxic positivity, and cruel wellbeing. The session will be interactive and draw on the experiences of participants to relate these ideas to our workplace contexts. The presentation will suggest tools to help educators come together and develop collective language around workplace emotions.

Conditions supporting and maintaining the effective incorporation of the general capabilities of the Australian Curriculum

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The general capabilities of the Australian Curriculum is one of three dimensions mandated to be taught to school students. With the current societal, environmental and economic changes within a globally competitive environment, these capabilities are nationally and internationally regarded as crucial to quality schooling. Competency in these areas is seen as fundamental to school leavers navigating the transformational changes shaping their world. Despite this, limited research evidence exists on the successful incorporation of the general capabilities into Australian schooling. This research examined general capabilities implementation within one Western Australian school identified as a leader in this space. Specifically, the project investigated the conditions that initiate, support and maintain effective incorporation and implementation of the general capabilities. Using a constructivist approach through a single-site case study, key school staff shared their insights through semi-structured interviews. Analysis of relevant internal and external school documents and social media complemented interview data. Data were analysed using the activity system of the cultural historical activity theory (CHAT). Inductive elemental coding, deductive exploratory coding and pattern coding were used to determine categories and themes. Findings drawn from the analysis supported current knowledge on effective implementation processes and highlighted significant new knowledge within this field.

Using an "ePortfolio of evidence" to demonstrate achievement of national standards

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In 2014, the Teacher Education Ministers' Advisory Group's (TEMAG) report was a significant catalyst in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs across Australia. One recommendation from this report called for pre-service teachers to develop a 'Portfolio of Evidence' (TEMAG, 2014, p. 33) to formally demonstrate achievement of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2017). While portfolios and ePortfolios have been in use in ITE courses for years, this new 'requirement' intensified the focus and highlighted the need to explore the efficacy of ePortfolio implementation. The research goal was to explore pre-service teachers' perceptions and attitudes to ePortfolios and potentially influence this through a change in teaching practice. The research comprised a rapid systematic review to identify ePortfolio practice towards registration and employment; an online survey of pre-service teachers to examine confidence and needs relating to the

ePortfolio; implementation of improved scaffolding programs; and focus group interviews to explore possible benefits or attitudinal changes resulting from the updated scaffolding processes. What was identified was that while pre-service teachers came to see the value of the ePortfolio, many still did not connect with it as a tool for demonstrating achievement. To most students, it was seen primarily as an assignment, which makes earlier or deeper engagement difficult.

Parents as first educators: A mixed-methods study of self-efficacy, shame and self-stigma about children's digital device use

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This study employs a mixed-methods approach to investigate the impact of shame, parental self-stigma, and societal pressures on parental self-efficacy in managing children's digital device use among 394 predominantly female Australian parents. Quantitative analyses reveal significant mediation through self-stigma between shame and self-efficacy, supported by confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling. Qualitative findings highlight societal, judgement-based, and social media pressures influencing parent self-stigma and efficacy. Recommendations stress the importance of education, viewing parents as primary educators, and policy initiatives to clarify digital guidelines and support interventions that mitigate parental shame and self-stigma. These insights offer critical support for enhancing parent self-efficacy in digital parenting, emphasising education and policy as key drivers for effective intervention.

Can you be whatever you want? An autoethnographic and pictorial narrative mapping of parameters of possibility

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“Can you be whatever you want?” is an ontological enquiry examined within the pluralistic dynamic framework offered through creative analytical practice (CAP) ethnography via a convergence of autoethnographic and pictorial narrative mapping, and constructivist grounded theory, bringing together what might be known empirically, as well as what might be learned through evocative writing. Set in a context of an ‘age of possibilities’, and inculcated with the promise of the Australian dream, we are instilled with the belief that we can be whatever we want in the *Lucky Country*. However, this dogma is aged, unchecked and under theorised, particularly when our unique ancestral histories, and the circumstances we find ourselves existing in can seem to play a role in who we become. In what ways, for example, are our choices defined by the cloth from which we’re cut? Can hessian really go to the ball? In answering these questions four of my ancestral lines were examined, documenting the people within it and who they had become. Specifically, I investigated their choices within their own socio-cultural realities and time, identified patterns through and across seven generations, and reflected on how their lived experiences have impacted on my life and the parameters of possibility that exist for me. The individual stories emerging from this process were compacted and coded, resulting in the construction of a ‘Can you be whatever you want? Parameters of possibility diagram’. This graphic representation demonstrates that our choices are confined by our collective ancestry, the platform of existence from which we are born, and a dizzying array of internal and external forces that can either enable or disable our occupational aspirations. How has your ancestry, platform of existence, and the forces converged to define your parameters of possibility, and how can you use this knowledge proactively?

Encouraging female teachers to become principals in Catholic composite secondary schools in WA

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This study explored factors encouraging female teachers to become principals in Catholic composite and secondary schools in Western Australia. Composite schools include both primary and secondary students. Using a constructivist paradigm, specifically interpretivism, the study employed a symbolic interactionist perspective to explore participant experiences. An instrumental case study method was used, with data collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 14 female principals and researcher field notes. Results highlighted the importance of support from key administrators, particularly principals, and the influence of colleagues and friends during early teaching years. Parents significantly impacted the female participants' lives and self-valuations. Motivation for pursuing principalship stemmed from a passion for education, the desire to enhance student progress and learning, promoting social equity, fairness, and people-oriented capabilities. Female principals were found to support and empower others, fostering professional relationships. They tend to engage more in instructional leadership compared to male principals. Despite their capabilities, the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) noted discrepancies in the number of female principals versus the number of male principals in educational settings internationally and nationally.

Through dangers untold, and hardships unnumbered: A trip through the ethics approval labyrinth

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Ethics approval is a vital step for any research project - and rightly so! But what happens when research progress is impacted by lengthy delays and challenges? This session will explore the presenter's experience of applying for ethics approval across a number of Australian states and school settings, examining the impact of these challenges on PhD research progress, and posing some questions as to the overall impacts of such challenges on the field of educational research in Australia. This is a work-in-progress reflection, as part of a developing autoethnographic piece of writing - personal experiences and reflections from attendees are both welcomed and encouraged.

Gender (in)equity and women's experiences with STEM leadership in Western Australia's private sector

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There is an urgency in Australia around addressing the question as to why there is a lack of women in STEM leadership positions. Previous research has engaged with this concept, but statistics on women entering leadership have not dramatically shifted (Ladkin & Probert, 2019; Roberts, 2014; Rice, 2017; Still, 2006; White, 2015). This phenomenon aligns with Australia's national gender pay gap, which is currently at 13% (Australian Government, 2022), meaning women earn substantially less than men.

Based on a qualitative study, this presentation highlights gender (in)equity and women's experiences with STEM leadership in Western Australia's private sector. Showcasing emergent themes, and based on semi-structured interviews, the presentation reports on women's narratives about their opportunities and challenges in STEM. Findings will be

particularly useful for educational stakeholders and decision makers in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors.

An exploration of the effects of extended reality (XR) on creativity in an Australian secondary school context

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Recent advancements in technology have enabled extended reality (XR), an overarching term that encompasses virtual reality (VR) and mixed reality (MR), to be viable and widespread, especially in the creative industries. Specifically, a key aim of the mandated Western Australian curriculum is for students to be exposed to various technologies and techniques to facilitate creative problem-solving (SCSA, n.d.). Indeed, the importance of creativity in education has long been established as a global goal. Aligning with these aspirations, this study will explore XR and its effects on creativity in a WA classroom, making this a timely and useful investigation, especially as, based on current knowledge, no research studies currently exist regarding XR in this context. Using a case study methodology, the data collected will consist of semi-structured interviews, a questionnaire and evaluated artwork to provide a rich and insightful overview of XR intervention in the classroom. This study will be important to educators interested in practical information about incorporating XR in the classroom and those seeking information about XR's benefits in terms of creativity.

Positive veteran mathematics and science teachers in WA

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While many teachers tend to wind down towards the end of their careers, a small group known as positive veteran teachers (PVTs) remain enthusiastic and engaged until retirement. A systematic review of literature from 2000 to 2020 highlighted that PVTs, who have been teaching for over twenty years or are older than forty, exhibit a strong sense of agency and professional identity including a continuing desire to experiment and embrace changes; a high level of personal comfort in their teaching role and a willingness to take on leadership roles.

Despite existing research on PVT characteristics, there has been limited investigation into positive veteran Mathematics and Science (M&S) teachers specifically. This study had three aims. The first was to research the characteristics of PVTs of M&S in WA, the second was to investigate if there were any meaningful differences between the characteristics of the PVTs of M&S in WA and generic PVTs as found in the academic literature. The ultimate aim was to provide actionable guidance to decision-makers, school administrators, policymakers, and stakeholders to facilitate the transformation of today's novices into the PVTs of M&S of tomorrow in WA.

The study's ontology, epistemology, methodology, significance, and implications will be described, and the research questions will be answered in this presentation at WAIER 2024

University gardens and student mental health

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Nature links for students have gained increased attention, partially due to their mental health benefits. Connecting with nature in Perth, Western Australia, ranges from manicured

lawns, native gardens, to remnant bushland. This project was co-designed with university students and analysed the reflections of members of a University Community Garden following Covid.

Interviews with 8 participants revealed that the University Community Garden had a large role in maintaining their mental health during tertiary study. The work and time investment of student participants in the Community Garden was voluntary (gained no financial or University credit). When considering the usual weekly activities, the Community Garden with nearby bushland was identified as a place of 'acceptance', 'no failure', 'regular activities' and 'no judgment'. Reflections on Covid-enforced time away were overwhelmingly negative including 'isolation', 'desperately unhappy' and 'I wanted to drop out'.

Students identified 'creatively generative' activities and community interactions as pivotal to their positive experiences in the garden. These facilitated support for student mental health and indirectly affected successful completion of enrolled units. The high value of space identified as different from normal classrooms and 'quiet', highlighted characteristics aligned with universal design for learning (UDL) principles and inclusive education.

Implementing science inquiry pedagogy in upper primary and lower secondary classrooms

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Science inquiry has been at the forefront of science learning and teaching theory for over half a century and is considered fundamental to the science curriculum in many countries, including Australia. Despite government strategies to improve student attainment and engagement, and support for teachers in facilitating effective inquiry-based pedagogy, there is still much to learn about how inquiry is enacted in science classrooms. This qualitative study combined teacher surveys, observations, and interviews to investigate how primary and secondary teachers enacted science inquiry in 56 observed lessons, and the reasons behind their chosen inquiry pedagogies. Classroom observations revealed that primary teachers predominantly used guided inquiry, while secondary teachers mainly used structured inquiry. Although teachers implemented all essential features of science inquiry, these features were spread across multiple lessons, limiting students' exposure to the complete inquiry process and the opportunity to understand how the features work together during an investigation. Interviews with teachers provided insights into their reasoning for their practice. These findings contribute to a better understanding of current science inquiry implementation in classrooms and have implications for informing teachers' pedagogy and sharing best practices.

Investigating the design and impact of professional learning and development provided to *widyaiswaras* in Indonesia

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In my research *widyaiswaras* are Indonesian civil servants acting as teachers, trainers or lecturers in government training centres (often referred to as "corporate universities") that are responsible for delivering public sector professional learning and development to other government employees. As their competence is critically important for Indonesia's future, *widyaiswaras* are required to undertake a minimum of 20 hours of professional learning and development (PLD) per year. My study examined *widyaiswaras*' views about this PLD using a concurrent triangulation mixed-method design. Quantitative data were collected with a survey. "Impact of Teacher Professional Development" (ITPD) that included scales to

assess job satisfaction and teaching efficacy (N=116 *widyaiswaras* from nine corporate universities). Qualitative information was collected using interviews about the design of the PLD and the quantitative responses (N=37 *widyaiswaras* from seven corporate universities).

Participants generally perceived their PLD favourably, aligning with impactful PLD characteristics, including being job-embedded, and meeting their needs in terms of applicability and time allocation. Importantly, the results suggest positive and statistically significant relationships (Pearson's correlation) between the impact of PLD and *widyaiswaras'* job satisfaction and teaching efficacy.

The influence of school libraries using the *Room to Read* library model on rural school communities in the Nagekeo District, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia

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A school library provides access to books and information, serving as a sanctuary for students. It fosters immersive reading experiences, enhances reading skills through interactive approaches, and involves parents in activities. Despite its significance, little research explores the influence of school libraries on rural communities. This study will examine the impact of school libraries that use the *Room to Read* library model, in the Nagekeo district, Flores Island, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. Using qualitative methods, including focus group discussions, interviews and observations, this research will fill a gap in understanding school libraries' roles in the rural setting and offer valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders in education

Factors affecting mathematics teacher beliefs and pedagogical practices when implementing inquiry-based learning

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The movement towards inquiry-based approaches has been prominent in education for many years. This research explored how the beliefs and pedagogical practices of mathematics teachers aligned when implementing inquiry-based approaches of teaching and learning. Based on a sequential explanatory mixed methods design, data from surveys, semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and follow-up interviews were collected from ten teachers from Australia and the United Kingdom. At the culmination of the study, inductive and deductive processes were used to analyse and interpretate of data collected. Several key themes emerged in regard to factors influencing teachers' pedagogical choices and beliefs: student's ability, time constraints, difficulty in assessing the investigation component, teacher anxiety, ineffective professional development courses and a mismatch between belief and practice. Students' ability was commonly identified as teachers believed that inquiry-based learning did not suit most students for mathematics learning or that students cannot engage with it unless they have good content knowledge. Some teachers strongly felt that inquiry-based learning had potential yet they did not use it in their classrooms. This study aims to provide a rich and in-depth understanding of how the mathematics curriculum has supported inquiry-based instructions and its impact on teachers' beliefs, changes to their pedagogical practices, and the effects of those choices. The findings may provide information for the International Baccalaureate organisations and schools on supporting teachers to deliver the intended curriculum more effectively.

Digital technologies and the early childhood sector: Are we fostering digital capabilities and agency in young children?

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Across Australia, early years learning frameworks recommend digital technologies be integrated into early years centres. All digital technology policies in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) are governed by national frameworks and documentation that advise on the implementation and management of digital technology. This includes National Laws and Regulations, the EYLF (Australian Government Department of Education, 2022) and the NQF (Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority, 2012). Introduced in 2009, the Early Years Learning Framework, requires educators to foster children's use of technologies for accessing information, investigating ideas, and representing their thinking. The National Quality Framework also encourages children to engage with digital technology for experimentation. Using a researcher created *Digital Technology Activity Framework* for early years centres, this research examined broad digital technology integration in a sample of Australian early years centres. Using desktop audits, interviews and observations, the study found that while digital technologies were widely embedded, there were significant opportunities evident for further promoting children's agency with devices. These findings suggest that to support children's achievement of learning outcomes with digital technologies, greater sector-wide professional learning and aligned resources in effective digital pedagogy and policy development would be valuable for both early years centre directors and educators.

Dr Wilson's abstract was not available prior to the printing deadline for the Program Booklet.

Something from my garden: An arts-based enquiry into the impacts of expert mentoring on beginning arts teacher experience

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Australian early career teachers (ECTs), including arts teachers (ECATS), are known to benefit from mentoring tailored to meet their needs, especially post COVID 19, at a time when 30-40% of teachers internationally are leaving because of stress. At the same time, collaborative non-hierarchical mentoring has been shown over recent years to reduce stress and attrition rates both here in Australia and further afield. This arts-based education research (ABER) aims to highlight the transformative potential of tailored mentoring for West Australian ECATs (post covid) by establishing an online peer support group for mentees coupled with one-on-one expert mentoring partnerships. Arts based methods are being employed in the interpreting observations and interviews through art praxis (drawing, painting and photography) because arts works exhibited in the public gallery settings can amplify voices that are otherwise hard to hear (e.g ECATS). The outcome will be a major exhibition of visual artworks with an exegesis.

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