

PARE NEWS

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Seminars, Conferences and Events

American Educational Research Association (AERA) April 27 - May 1, 2013, San Francisco, California

2013 AERA Annual Meeting

"Education and Poverty: Theory, Research, Policy and Praxis"

For more information: www.aera.net

Netherlands Educational Research Association (Vereniging voor Onderwijs Research) (VOR) May 29-31, 2013, Free University, Brussels

Onderwijs Research Dagen 2013 (ORD-2013)

"Values and Education"

For more information: <http://www.vorsite.nl/en>

BELMAS Annual Conference 2013 - "Leading Beyond the Institution" July 12-14, 2013

For more information:

<http://www.belmas.org.uk/belmas11/events/conf2013.eb>

Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) Societe Canadienne Pour l'étude de l'éducation (SCÉÉ) June 2-5, 2013, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

CSSE Conference 2013
University of Victoria

For more information: <http://www.csse.org/>

European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI) August 27 – 31, 2013, Munich, Germany

The 15th Biennial EARLI Conference: EARLI Conference 2013

"Responsible Teaching and Sustainable Learning"

For more information: www.earli.org/home

News and Awards

PARE Workshop: “The place of surveys in Educational Research: An Introduction” facilitate by Dr. Sherwin Rodrigues

Pakistan Association for Research in Education (PARE) organized the workshop on The place of surveys in Educational Research: An Introduction on October 20, 2012. It was facilitated by Dr. Sherwin Rodrigues, Assistant Professor AKU-IED

This initiative was welcomed with an overwhelming response by PARE members. Seats were limited for 20 members.

The main objectives of the workshop were:

1. Participants will be familiarized with the what, why, how and when of survey design.
2. Participants will have hands-on opportunities of developing questionnaire item.

PARE Workshop: “Exploring Future Career Options” facilitate by Ms. Kiran Zubair

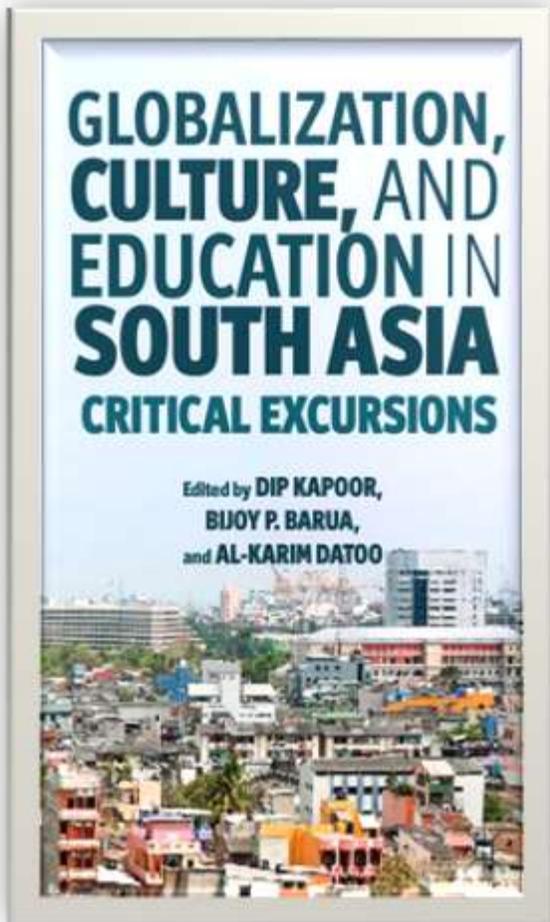
Pakistan Association for Research in Education (PARE) organized the workshop on “Exploring Future Career Options” on November 10, 2012. It was facilitated by Ms. Kiran Zubair, Career planning counsellor and professional development trainer

This initiative was welcomed with an overwhelming response by PARE members. Seats were limited for 20 members.

The main objectives of the workshop were:

1. Discover what they love to do.
2. Gain skills require doing it.
3. Learn about possible career.
4. Choices for the future.





Globalization, Culture, and Education in South Asia: Critical Excursions

Edited By Dip Kapoor, Bijoy Barua & Al-Karim Datto.

This collection brings together an experienced group of South Asian/diasporic scholars in higher education, schooling, and adult education to develop a regional perspective on the multiple implications of globalization and its cultural and educational imbrications in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives. Relying on a blend of policy, critical-theoretical, and practice-based perspectives, the contributors describe and critically analyze key trends in the region, while pointing out new directions pertaining to future developments in education and culture in South Asia in relation to the contradictory implications of globalization in both urban and rural context.

***Dip Kapoor** is an associate professor of International Education at the University of Alberta, Canada, and a research associate at the Center for Research and Development Solidarity (CRDS), a rural people's organization in Orissa, India. **Bijoy Barua** is an associate professor and dean of the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences at East West University in Dhaka, Bangladesh. **Al-Karim Datto** is a sociologist of education and an assistant professor at the Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED)*

Members' Achievement

- Congratulations to Al Karim Datto for co-editing "Globalization, Culture, And Education in South Asia Critical Excursions". It would be useful for PARE member to note that one of the editors Dr. Datto is a PARE member.
- Congratulations to Dr. Sajid Ali for publishing chapter "**The Educational Policy Field and National Education Policy making in Pakistan**" in the book "Globalization, Culture, And Education in South Asia Critical Excursions".

- **“Education and zones of Exclusion: The life chances for a Pakistani child”** Dr. Sajid Ali Assistant Professor Aga Khan University-institute for Educational development, Karachi. 15th sustainable development conference, sustainable development in south Asia: shaping the future 11-13 December 2012, Islamabad.

Research in Focus

Developing number sense in young children through collaborative action research

By: Noor Bano

Mathematics education is a critical part of the curriculum for students worldwide (Linder, Costello & Stegelin, 2011). Children possess some mathematical understanding before entering into formal schooling. However, pre-primary education provides them with a platform where they start their systematic learning of mathematical concepts by connecting them with their daily life experiences. In this connection, effective teaching and learning processes make a difference in young children’s attitude towards mathematics and build a strong foundation for mathematics learning later in life. The effectiveness of teaching depends on the teachers’ content and pedagogical skills, which are enhanced through different courses and collaborative work with other teachers. Action research is one of the effective methods for continuous professional development of teachers as it informs teachers about their practices and empowers them to take leading responsibilities in their own teaching contexts (Donato, 2003). In order to facilitate pre-primary teachers’ and my own professional skills particularly in developing number sense in young children, I conducted a collaborative action research in one of the private schools in Karachi. Two pre-primary teachers and four pre-primary students participated in the study. Collaborative planning, teaching, interview, reciprocal observation of teaching methods and informal discussions with participant teachers helped me to collect and enrich my data. The data indicates that the collaborative action research benefitted both teachers and the young learners in multiple ways. It benefitted teachers in

developing pedagogical skills through planning, implementing, reflecting and re-planning with necessary changes in a cyclic way. It helped us in learning both skills and content from each other’s experiences and teaching practices, through co-teaching and providing feedback to each other. The study was helpful for young children to develop their understanding of numbers through their active engage with concrete materials for their exploration. It also enabled them to learn mathematical concepts in a smooth transition from concrete to representational to abstract level. The results of this study can be replicated in a public school context and in a rural setting over a longer period of time. On the basis of the study findings, I believe that this study can help pre-primary teachers and teacher educators in identifying different strategies and activities to enhance young children’s mathematical understanding.

Classroom interactions and the construction of students gender identity in a private primary school

By: Hamida Jessa

The study aimed to explore the role of classroom interactions between teacher and student and student and student in the construction of gender identities of children of early years. The study was conducted in one of the co-education primary private school in Karachi, Pakistan. A case study approach was used within the qualitative paradigm to explore the phenomena of classroom interactions, both verbal and non-verbal, of Class II. Observations of the teachers’ and students’ actions and practices, interviews and artifacts and textbook analyses were done as they unfolded in

the natural setting. The data was collected through observations of the classroom interactions, focus group interviews with students, formal and informal discussions with the teachers and analysis of the artifacts and the documents of Class II. All these sources helped me in exploring the role of classroom interactions in constructing gender identities in early years. The data gave me an in-depth understanding of the phenomena. The study reveals that they children bring powerful gender concepts from their homes and society in schools. The classroom, as a site, becomes a platform where the children reinforce and transform their gender identities by socializing with each other. Girls get messages of femininity, whereas boys get messages of masculinity through several means, such as language, actions, teaching and learning processes and curricular and non- curricular activities. It is the school and teachers who can challenge the gender stereotypes because teachers can play a role of change agents in the society and schools prepare the children for their future roles and responsibilities. The study also highlights the importance of favorable learning environment for both girls and boys by involving them in pairs and group discussions and activities. Sometimes, children may get involved in games for physical and mental development, and they may do so in order to make themselves social. The study evidenced that teachers treat boys and girls differently based on their assumptions. It points out the importance of gender awareness among the stakeholders of the school in order to provide them an equitable environment and to strengthen the students' learning.

Exploring male and female headteachers views and practices of discipline and disciplinary measures in the secondary schools

By: Shamim Ara Jan Alam

The focus of the research was to explore male and female principals' views of discipline and discipline strategies they employ for maintaining discipline in schools. The study also attempted to answer whether the gender of the principal makes any difference in discipline management or not. Qualitative investigation guided the design of the

study. The study sample comprised two secondary school principals (one male and one female) from private secondary schools in Karachi, Pakistan. They were selected through the mode of purposive sampling. Empirical data was collected by the means of semi-structured interviews, observation through shadowing and document analysis. The data was analysed in accordance with accepted procedures such as transcribing the data and coding it into themes and sub-themes as they emerged from the data. The results indicated the gendered attitude of the principals in discipline management. Both principals consider discipline as a source to maintain sex segregation in the entire school setting. Furthermore, the study revealed that boys receive corporal punishment more frequently in the male principal's school, because he perceives that boys are physically stronger than girls. Moreover, it was found that the female principal focused on caring, understanding, collaboration, involvement and human proximity as compared to the male head teacher who was assertive in the discipline management. Over all, it was revealed that principals' strategies of disciplining students are also guided by their personal experiences and socio-economic situation and the cultural practices of the pupils' parents. The study recommends that both schools need to adopt constructive strategies and incorporate the gender perspective into the discipline policy. Since this study is one of the few researches done in the field in Pakistan it is therefore expected to make a contribution to the gender studies done so far in this context.

Exploring the contribution of teaching and learning processes to the construction of students gender identity in early years classroom of two government primary schools in Karachi, Pakistan

By: Amina Bibi Baig

The construction of gender identity is a complex process which begins at a very early formative age. In the formative years, children begin making sense of how men and women are positioned in society. As important institutions, schools play an important role in this process, particularly with reference to students' understanding of gender

relationship around them. The present study explored how gender identity construction takes place in single sex classroom for early years. Qualitative research guided the study design which was conducted in two public sector's single sex schools (one for girls and one for boys) in Karachi, Pakistan. The data were collected through observations of the teacher-student interactions, student-student interactions, focused group discussion with children from both the schools and semi-structured interviews with the teachers (male and female teacher). The study found that the teaching and learning is gendered in single sex settings of a school, as gender messages are passed on to the students which play an important role in the gender identity construction of these children. The study indicated that the teachers' personal experiences greatly influence their perceptions regarding gender identities. There was also evidence that teachers have different expectations from girls and boys. Another important finding highlighted that children brought certain perceptions from home which contributed to the gender discourse in the context of the school. These children believed that they were different from each other because of being boys or girls and that they had different roles and responsibilities. Schools were, hence, found promoting those stereotypes regarding gender roles and responsibilities in a social context. All the participants were found to have views and practices around gender positioning which was approved by the larger society. The findings of the study emphasize the importance of gender awareness among the teachers in order to provide an equitable learning environment to the students. The research has significance for teachers, teacher educators and school management who wish to promote gender sensitive teaching and learning spaces in early years' education.

Tracing spaces of knower's autonomy for knowledge construction in International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum

By: Raheel Tajuddin Lakhani

Autonomy is readiness, which entails both capacity and willingness, to take charge of one's learning through critical thinking and reflection. The research focuses on envisaged, perceived

and enacted roles and meaning of autonomy of the knower in context of Theory of Knowledge course of IB Diploma Programme. It also explores the ways in which the autonomy of the knower reflects in the process of knowledge construction via interplay between curricular spaces such as course content, pedagogy and assessments. Qualitative case study approach was employed to gain the perception and experiences of knowers. Document analysis, observations, semi-structured interviews and personal portrayals were used as data collection methods. The findings of the research suggest that the learner holds central position as a 'knower' in the learning processes. The data gathered in the study gives indications that the meaning and scope of autonomy is defined by its context. The findings reveal that students are developing autonomy as they are becoming more competent in the art of critical thinking and reflection. Students are also demonstrating the key attributes such as inquisitiveness, resourcefulness, positive constructs of self and sustained interest for learning. Curriculum content, pedagogy and assessments foster autonomy of knowers by providing them necessary knowledge and skills. Consequently, each proposes some challenges to knower such societal and academic pressure related to questioning, less-directive instructions and limited spaces for creative expression. The results also indicate that knowers do not prefer development of autonomy as an independent sport because interdependency is highly valued in their cultural/social context. Such nature of autonomy also creates implications on the interplay between freedom and control in the teaching and learning processes. Therefore, the research recommends that autonomy should be supported by scaffolding through a guided inquiry, communication of role changes and discussions following the independent task to facilitate learning.

PARE News, Vol 1:2 Feed Back

I had gone through all the newsletters. It is really fascinating and encouraging towards academic writing.

(Yasmeen Jumani)

Upcoming PARE Workshops

“Action Research” 30th March 2013,
facilitator: Dr. Parveen

For Further Information: E-mail:
pare.secretariat@aku.edu

“Quantitative Research Design” April 2013,
AKU-IED, facilitator: Dr.Sadia Bhutta

For Further Information: E-mail:
pare.secretariat@aku.edu

Call for Contribution

PARE newsletter is designed to share latest educational research news, members' achievements, and information about latest research. The newsletter calls for submission under these categories. The next newsletter will be the April 2013 issue. Please send your contribution by April 5th, 2013. The length of submission should not exceed 100 words.

Please submit items to PARE Secretariat by email at pare.secretariat@aku.edu

We also welcome your suggestions to improve this publication.