

ICSEI EXPRESS and DIGEST

Volume 6 Issue 3, 2015

Co-Editors' Note

We're delighted to present the final edition of the ICSEI Express for 2015. Of course what is most exciting to us right now is the anticipation of our face to face gathering in January.

In this issue, you'll find notes on ICSEI 2016, as well as a report from this issue's featured network, the Data Use Network. An exciting new development is the inclusion of the first ever Twitter Chat, hosted by Dr. Michelle Jones of the Leadership Network and attended by ICSEI members from all over the world. You will find a link to her 'storify' of the conversation in the Network News section.

The Glasgow Congress is looking very strong - a lot of rich and varied papers have been proposed, and the lineup of keynotes and social/cultural events have the potential to offer new learning for everyone. We hope that you are making plans to join us there. For many ICSEI members, it is in our periodic face-to-face connections that powerful networks and collaborations are formed and sustained.

Please remember this publication is a venue for the exchange of news, views, and current research and practice related to school effectiveness and improvement of interest to the ICSEI membership. We hope you will make it your publication too! Do not hesitate to contact either one of us if you have anything you'd like considered for a future issue.



Susan E. Elliott-Johns



Paige Fisher

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1. President's Message

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

This time I want to share two striking experiences with you which have deeply touched me personally and professionally: One is the wave of people leaving their home countries for different reasons, mainly fleeing civil war in their country and trying to find new homes in Europe, which is effecting the whole Continent. The other is the Frankfurt Book Fair in Germany, which promoted Indonesia as the guest of honour this year, the country which brought ICSEI to Yogyakarta opening up new perspectives for most of us. Both happenstances have to do with schooling on both the micro and macro levels of educational systems.

Let's look at the first experience: Recently thousands of exhausted, surprised and relieved migrants reached Austria clambering off a fleet of Hungarian buses to find entry into a new and unknown world. Officials have struggled ever since to manage the flow of the countless migrants arriving daily from non-EU ports of departure.

This influx of people fleeing civil wars in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan has almost split societies into two halves: On the one hand the ones cheering their arrival, with many shouting "Welcome!" in both German and Arabic including charity workers who provided them a battery of supplies displayed in separately labelled shopping carts containing food, water and packages of hygiene products for men and women. On the other hand the mixed crowd of people from different strands of society full of anger marching the streets and demonstrating against the politicians' decision they would observe no legal limit on the number of asylum seekers it might take.

Schools have suddenly become the first places where young refugee children and youths meet the new world, struggling to deal with this great number of students sharing their lives often without being able to speak the German language. Schools suddenly had to rearrange their agenda to cope with the influx of unexpected guests and to open up their innate perspective. No school reform initiative has ever taken up such momentum as this kind of crisis bringing together a vast range of people working toward education that works. Dealing with diversity was no longer a rhetoric of professional learning days, but a total human experience with immediate effect.

And the second experience? Andrea Hirata was one of the Indonesian guest of honours authors highlighted at the Frankfurt Book Fair this year. Hirata had based his novel Laskar Pelangi [The Rainbow Troops] on his childhood experiences on the Island of Belitung (Sumatra), which he later described as "an irony about a lack of access to education for children in one of the world's wealthiest islands."

The book, which he had originally written as a dedication to his 15-year-old schoolteacher of the tiny, ramshackle village school who inspired the disadvantaged children of the island to learn and grow despite socioeconomic disadvantages, became one of the most bestselling books of the country and was also made into a movie. "We survived the economic difficulties that strangled us on a daily basis," Ikal, the main character of the novel, describes. "But above all, we survived the most immediate of threats: the threat of ourselves, our

disbelief in the power of education."

Both encounters I experienced have to do with education in emergencies, which tell us the story about developing skills and knowledge to meet today's challenges and fostering the resilience for surviving and thriving in an unknown future. "Education in emergencies provides hope for the future, because education is the brightest hope for the future...", a 17-year-old boy from South Sudan said, and one Syrian teenage refugee girl expressed her despair this way: "Without school there is no future, no happiness."

It is a challenge for all to critically question how schools position the future in the decisions they make today. Emergencies or critical incidents sometimes help in opening up new perspectives, and ICSEI has the potential to offer its members a space to prototype schooling for the future: Next stop Glasgow.



Michael Schratz ICSEI President

2. ICSEI News and Updates

2.1 Update on Glasgow Congress

'Measuring What Matters - re-thinking education measurement and accountability.' Just one of the submissions for ICSEI 2016 to whet your appetite, and ours, for what is shaping up to be a great conference in Glasgow in January 2016. Here in Scotland we are grappling with recent government announcements relating to standardised testing. The ICSEI 2016 conference provides the ideal locus to debate this, and issues and approaches to school effectiveness and improvement, across national and international systems.

With almost 500 initial submissions, the review process has been completed and the final stages of programme planning is now underway. Watch your emails for updates over the next few weeks.

ICSEI 2016 starts with a pre conference session hosted by the ICSEI Networks followed by an Early Career Researcher Forum. The conference will be formally opened by the Scottish Cabinet Secretary (Minister of Education) for Education and Lifelong Learning, Angela Constance.

Prepare yourself for a busy few days of great paper sessions, roundtables and symposia. The Innovate! sessions will be an opportunity to hear about cutting edge approaches and please do drop by the poster gallery to see some of the great work taking place around the world. But it's not over yet.... the Glasgow Social Committee have plans for ceilidh dancing, Burns poetry and maybe even some whisky tasting. You can look forward to a warm wel come or, as we say in Scotland, Failte gu Alba.

2.2 Ariel Lindorff-Vijayendran: Department of Education, University of Oxford

The ICSEI student subgroup would like to announce a slight schedule change for the planned ICSEI 2016 Early Career Researcher Forum pre-conference event, which will take place on January 6th, 2016, from 11:15am to 1:30pm. This pre-conference event offers graduate students and early career researchers the opportunity to network with each other and to get advice from more experienced researchers and practitioners. The format for the Forum will include a panel discussion and roundtable session, with further details to be announced shortly.

We would still love to hear from experienced researchers and practitioners who might be interested in participating as roundtable experts. Please contact ariel.vijayendran@education.ox.ac.uk for further information.

2.3 ICSEI Goes to Canada in 2017!



Ottawa Senators, part of the National Hockey League

Credit: Ottawa Tourism

ICSEI 2017 will be held in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. The theme for ICSEI 2017 is "Collaborative Partnerships for System-Wide Educational Improvement." This theme gives prominence to the importance of partnerships between and among the various participants in international education systems -- students, parents, communities, schools, districts, government and academics -- to inform and impact student learning, practitioner professional learning, and system leadership. Keynote speakers will offer international and local perspectives on systems effectiveness, including successes and challenges along the pathway to improvement. Come enjoy ICSEI 2017 in Canada's capital - the most educated city in the country!*

*learn more about Ottawa at Canadian Trade Commissioner Service http://bit. ly/1kmYnLe

2.4 ICSEI Monographs

ICSEI is proud to announce the release of the first of four new Monographs for financial members. The design and development of the monographs has been led by ICSEI Past President Alma Harris and Helen Malone from the US Institute for Educational Leadership with editorial support from Andy Hargreaves. All four monographs have been refereed by two Board members and revised accordingly. These monographs arose as part of a symposium at ICSEI 2015.

ICSEI offers a platform for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to engage in salient school effectiveness and school improvement (SESI) discourse. It is in this spirit that the four-part monograph series was developed; to both highlight cutting edge scholarship in SESI and to illuminate discussions from the annual ICSEI conference. Each of the monographs addresses a global SESI area, coupling empirical evidence with issues raised during the ICSEI 2015 symposium, "Networks for Change: Global Perspectives, Local Practices." The monographs conclude with implications for policy, research, and practice.

The four-part series features:

Local Innovation and Autonomy in Contexts of Standardization and Accountability Stephen Anderson, Professor, University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

This monograph draws upon data from a comparative investigation of school effectiveness characteristics in 22 Ontario elementary schools selected for variation in performance on provincial tests (high and low) relative to other schools in comparable demographic contexts (mid/high and low SES). Anderson responds to the inquiry, "If everybody is doing the same things, why do we continue to see gaps in student performance between schools?" He calls to question whether meaningful opportunities for innovation and its diffusion can co-exist with the pervasive press for standardization in education goals, outcomes and best practices.

How do We Create and Exchange Knowledge for Systemic Change?

Louise Stoll, Professor of Professional Learning, London Centre for Leadership in Learning, UCL Institute of Education

A national R&D project, involving the UCL Institute of Education and Challenge Partners, a national network of over 300 schools, explores how middle leaders (department chairs and teacher leaders) contribute to effective practices by sharing knowledge, engaging in joint practice development, and leading and tracking colleagues' change across schools. Stoll explores the question, "Who are the key players in the middle tier between government and schools, and what role should researchers play?" Her study focuses on familiar ICSEI territory of creating collaborative cultures within and between schools - professional learning communities.

Student Voice: A Catalyst for Educational Change

Dennis Shirley, Professor, Lynch School of Education, Boston College

This paper presents a study of cross-national networks for school improvement and educational change. Shirley reports on findings from an educational network organized by the Alberta Teachers' Association in Canada, the Center for International Mobility Organization, and the National Board of Education in Finland, a learning exchange change network that brought principals, teachers, and high school students from two jurisdictions together to learn about similarities and differences between the two systems and to engender their own strategies for change. He responds to a question, "How can we improve learning, and do so in a way that students have opportunities to express and develop their opinions on matters both large and small?"

Exceptional Effectiveness: Taking a Comparative Perspective on Educational Performance

Alma Harris, Institute of Education, University College London & Andy Hargreaves, Boston College

This monograph argues that more contemporary empirically-based comparative studies in the SESI field are needed to counter the pervasive influence of popular interpretations of large-scale assessments, such as PISA. At the 2015 ICSEI Congress, a symposium that focused on the opportunities and challenges facing the SESI field explored the relationship between comparative effectiveness, performance, and measurement. The catalyst for a group discussion within this symposium was a comparative study of high performance in three sectors - education, business, and sport - and a recent analysis of the leadership associated with high performance in these three sectors. This monograph proposes that such comparative analyses across sectors and systems offer much deeper insights into the process of educational reform in diverse educational settings. The monograph also addresses the question, "Is co-opetition (a synergistic relation between competition and collaboration) a dynamic opportunity or a grudging necessity in exercising uplifting leadership" that enhances improvement in schools and school systems?"

The authors and I hope the series will encourage ICSEI members to utilize the annual conference as a place to not only share cutting edge research and SESI practices but to also engage in collaboration that generates new contributions to the field.

These Monographs will be released in the ICSEI members only area from November 2015 to February and members will be notified when the next in the series becomes available.

The ICSEI Board is grateful to the editors and authors of these extraordinary monographs and is looking forward to the discussions and new ideas that arise from this series.

3. Network Reports

3.1 Network activities at ICSEI 2016

Network leaders

- **Leadership**: Jacob Easley II (<u>drjeasleyii@gmail.com</u>) and Pierre Tulowitzki (<u>ptulowitzki@gmail.com</u>)
- MORE: Daniel Muijs (D.Muijs@soton.ac.uk and Marcus Pietsch (pietsch@leuphana.de)
- Early childhood: Persille Schwartz (psc@eva.dk)
- **3P:** Naomi Mertens (<u>naomi@mylearningcommunity.eu</u>) and Erica van Roosmalen (<u>verica.vanroosmalen@eqao.com</u>)
- **Data use:** Kim Schildkamp (<u>k.schildkamp@utwente.nl</u>) and Jan Vanhoof (<u>jan.van-hoof@ua.ac.be</u>)

1) Pre-conference on January 6:

Introduction

ICSEI has five active networks: the Leadership Network, MoRE, Data use, 3P and Early Childhood. These networks were initiated at the ICSEI Fort Lauderdale conference in 2006. These networks consist of groups within ICSEI who were already forming and holding events between regular annual meetings. As of 2006 these networks are more closely tied to and officially recognized by ICSEI. At each ICSEI conference these networks hold memberships meetings (open to all ICSEI conference participants) and organize a pre- conferences and symposia. Their symposia often involve members from a number of countries focusing on the network area of interest. The network members engage in ongoing communication in between conferences.

The Five Networks

The Leadership Network is for leaders at all levels: in practice, policy and research. The focus is on sharing and advancing the creation of knowledge in the field of educational leadership, drawing on perspectives from around the globe. The network includes members from all over the world. The Leadership Network currently strives to examine how educational leadership aimed at school effectiveness and strengthening the quality of teaching and learning is enacted and studied in various country contexts. From this work, the aim is to identify emerging themes of interest in the field of educational leadership in and around schools for policy, practice, and research.

The Methods of Researching Educational Effectiveness (MoRE Network) focuses on the following: presenting and interpreting results of empirical studies in educational effectiveness; exchanging ideas for research in effectiveness and evaluation of improvement programs; developing research proposals for studies in educational effectiveness, especially international comparative studies; discussing problems encountered in educational effectiveness research and identify possible solutions; identifying new research methods for issues unique to educational effectiveness; and contributing to the establishment of a data-bank of research instruments used in educational effectiveness studies.

The **Data Use Network** brings together researchers, policy makers and practitioners working in the field of data-based decision making. The focus is on the use of data, such as assessments, observations, and surveys, to improve education at school, classroom, and individual student level. Important topics for the network are: aspects of policy or practice with regard to data use that have positive impacts in contexts in different countries; factors that hinder or enable the use of data; effects and side effects of data use; defining effective data use (i.e., what does data use in different countries look like); support of schools in the use of data; characteristics of effective professional development in the use of data.

Practitioners, i.e. teachers, principals, administrators, consultants, trainers have often worked in isolation, but collaboration is required between Policymakers, Politicians & Practitioners, which is the focus of the **3P network**. It is important to focus on capacity building so that as local educational and children's services policy is developed it really stimulates and facilitates school improvement, and school improvement becomes integrated into the broader construct of health, wellbeing, community and lifelong learning. The 3P network is a professional practice and research network for all those professionals engaged in the policy determination, planning and delivery of educational and other services to children, young people and families.

The Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) network consists of a conglomerate of practitioners, researchers and policy makers having attended ICSEI since the beginning of the network in 2008. Globally there's an increased focus on the economic as well as human benefits of children having attending quality ECEC institutions at a young age. The degree of expansion varies tremendously leaving room for co-national learning. The ECEC-network serves as a platform for getting quick access to and exchanging knowledge about the rapid development of Early Childhood Education and Care around the world, and especially in the countries that network members represent. Since most members are unable to attend the congress on a regular term, the network is updated once a year and congress participants working with ECEC-matters are mostly welcome to join the network.

Program

The central theme of the pre-conference is networking. For those of you that do not know the ICSEI network we invite you to come to the pre-conference to get to know the networks and their members. For those of you that do know the network and/or are a member of one or more of the networks, use this opportunity to discuss current issues in your field with fellow researchers, practitioners and policy makers. This is a great opportunity for graduate students to get to know ICSEI members, and the ICSEI networks.

In the morning each of the networks will introduce themselves shortly and will put forward a question of issue from their field to discuss. After this plenary introduction we will break out in round table sessions. Each network will lead one round table. At these tables you can get to know the networks and engage in an in-depth discussion on the issue or question put forward by the network. After the round table sessions, the pre-conference will be ended with closing remarks from our ICSEI president Prof. Dr. Michael Schratz.

Schedule of the pre-conference:

- 11.15 11.45: introduction of all the networks and the issue or question they would like to put forward
- 11.45 12.30: three round table sessions to get to know the networks further and to discuss the issue or question raised by the network
- 12.30 13.00: lunch break
- 13.00 13.30: two round table sessions
- 13.30 13.45: closing remarks by the ICSEI president Prof. Dr. Michael Schratz

2) Network business meetings

Please refer to the 2016 Glasgow conference site for information as it becomes available.

3.2 3P Network

We have sent in a symposium proposal on behalf of the 3P network. The theme for the symposium is "Networks as intermediaries of innovation: Mobilising knowledge to action within the education sector and beyond"

The aim of this 3P Network (Policymakers, Politicians and Practitioners) proposal is to create space for dialogue and exploration around the collaborative efforts between school education systems and other sectors occurring locally and internationally to educate all

children to their full potential. To this end, we are inviting the participation of What Works Scotland (WWS) as well as ICSEI members who are engaged in collaborative network endeavors that support the learning and wellbeing of children and youth, especially those facing inequity." Our intention is to build on last years' symposium and network meetings and the ideas we had about working in the interspace of organisations, sectors and networks. The field of intermediaries is still in development and resonates with a lot of work we do, being policy makers, politicians or practitioners.

3.3 Leadership Network Goes 21st C with a Twitter chat!

On October 24th, 2015, Dr. Michelle Jones of the Leadership network hosted a first-ever Twitter chat. It was fascinating to see the perspectives and hear the voices of participants from all over the world in 'real time'. If you <u>follow this link, you'll find a 'storify' of the</u> chat itself.

3.4 Focus Network: Data Use Network

Schools are faced with a growing number of performance challenges. Every day, school leaders and teachers are faced with decisions concerning the quality of education. However, several of these decisions are taken (too) fast, based on intuition, anecdotal information, and assumptions. Schools and teachers are often inclined to take action immediately, instead of investigating the causes of problems based on data. While acting quickly may feel efficient, acting without adequate knowledge is certainly not effective. It often leads to measures that do not work, and do not increase the quality of education. Instead of 'jumping to conclusions', schools can use data, such as student test results, questionnaire results and interviews, in their decision making process. This is what is called data-based decision making, or in short data use.

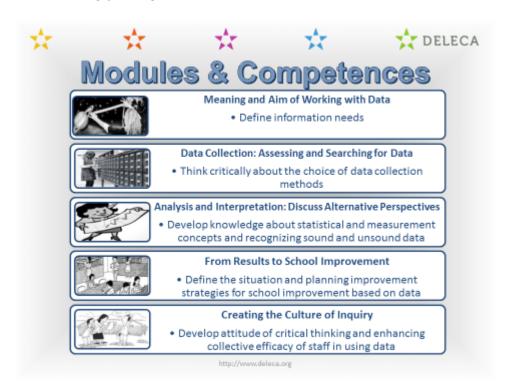
It is crucial that knowledge on data-based decision making is shared as it is our belief that this is the way forward in improving education. This is one of the reasons that a group of researchers set up this network. Establishing the extent to which aspects of policy or practice with regard to data use seem to have positive impacts in contexts in different countries, is important for the development of robust theories on data use, and the factors supporting or hindering this practice, as well as for the improvement of provision of data. Much can be learned by considering data use in different countries, and sharing knowledge on data use practices around the world.

The main goal of this network is to share knowledge on data use to improve data-driven decision making practices in schools around the world. By sharing knowledge we can learn from each other instead of constantly "reinventing the wheel". This sharing of knowledge will take place at conferences, such as ICSEI and AERA, and by means of communication devices, such as this newsletter. In this newsletter we would like to draw your attention to a couple of interesting developments in the field. These are described below:

Research and projects:

- 1. Deleca (Developing Leadership Capacity for Data-Informed School Improvement) is a Comenius project funded with the support of the European Commission in which 5 international partners are involved: Belgium, Slovenia, Sweden, Czech Republic & Latvia. Within this project a universally usable and locally/nationally adaptable knowledge-based competence training module for school leaders was developed, piloted and disseminated. Furthermore, an implementation strategy was designed. The training programme will help school leaders to:
- get an adequate overview/knowledge of the main sources of data useful for improvement of student learning and school development,
- develop school leaders' competence to understand such data,
- develop school leaders' competence to work with these data for the benefit of their schools' development.
- Following the training module school leaders will be more competent in:
- Building a culture of data use,
- Developing an inquiry habit of mind,
- Data literacy, using data to improve instructional practice, school effectiveness and professional accountability,
- Focusing professional conversations on instructional improvement,
- Ensuring that data are made available for use by school staff,
- Using data to stimulate discussion, rethink directions and monitor progress with external stakeholders.

The training package is based on 5 modules:



The full training package and more information about the project can be found on www.deleca.org.

- 2. Research into how teachers can be equipped for data based instructional differentiation: The Netherlands Initiative for Education Research approved a proposal of the University of Twente (Adrie Visscher & Marieke van Geel) and the University of Maastricht (Jeroen van Merriënboer & Diane Dolmans) for research into instructional differentiation. Many teachers experience difficulties in implementing Data-Based Decision Making in the classroom, especially with delivering instruction adjusted to the achievement differences between students. The goal of this project is to contribute to solving this problem. The project will last four years and includes a thorough task analysis of the teacher competences instructional differentiation requires. This is done in regular primary education as well as in primary schools in which ICT plays an important role. Based on the results, a two-year teacher training trajectory will be designed on the basis of 4-Components Instructional Design theory (Van Merriënboer en Kirschner). The training will be implemented, and training effects on teachers' differentiation skills, and on student performance will be investigated longitudinally. Moreover, based on the results of the project an analysis will be made of how teachers can be equipped better for differentiation during their pre-service training. For more information: a.j.visscher@utwente.nl.
- 3. Karen Seashore (Louis), Henry May (University of Minnesota), and Elizabeth Farley-Ripple (University of Delaware) started a new federally funded 5 year project to develop instruments to develop and test instruments to measure research utilization systems in the U.S. The Center for Research Use in Education (CRUE) will engage in a series of research studies that will (a) understand the nature and depth of research use in schools, (b) identify the factors in both the research and school communities and the relationships between them that hinder or facilitate research use, and (c) develop strategies to make more meaningful and impactful connections between research-based evidence and classroom practice." (from the proposal). This study will have a broad understanding of research that will include but will not be limited to data use. The center's work will complement that of another federally funded center which focuses on data and research use among teachers and its impact in classrooms. That center involves Jim Spillane, Cynthia Coburn, and Bill Penuel, among others. For more information: klouis@umn.edu
- 4. A working group developed a Data Use Standards and Standards in Practice. This resource details the essential knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors required for educators to effectively use data to inform instructional and programmatic decisions. It is intended to inform pre- and in-service educator training programs. It can be found here.
- 5. The university of Twente (Wilma Kippers, Cindy Poortman, Hanadie Leusink, and Kim Schildkamp) started a new project on how to support schools in the use of data from a diagnostic assessment, administered in the lower grades of secondary education on the subjects Dutch language, English language and mathematics. The data team® procedure will be used to train and support schools in the use of these data as well as other data, to improve student achievement. For more information: k.schildkamp@utwente.nl

Publication opportunities:

The Statewide longitudinal data systems grant program has a Call to the Field, which is due Feb. 1, 2016, where organizations/people can share how they have used the standards to promote data use. More information can be found on the website.

New publications:

- 1. Bertrand, M. & Marsh, J. (2015). Teachers' sensemaking of data and implications for equity. *American Educational Research Journal*, 52(5), 861-893.
- 2. Schildkamp, K., Poortman, C. L., & Handelzalts, A. (2015). Data teams for school improvement. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1080/09243453.2015.1056192.
- 3. Van der Kleij, F. M., Vermeulen, J. A., Schildkamp, K., & Eggen, T. J. H. M. (2015). Integrating data-based decision making, assessment for learning and diagnostic testing in formative assessment. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 22, 324-343.

4. ICSEI Express: The Next Edition

Expect another issue in April, 2016. We will share some news and highlights of the Glasgow Congress, and feature updates and perspectives from selected Networks. We would also be interested in sharing Digest versions of papers presented at the Congress.

If you have an announcement that you would like to have featured, or you would like to submit a 'Digest' version of a paper or project (500-1000 words) that you are working on, we will accept submissions in January and February. This can be a great way to highlight your work to the ICSEI membership. All queries and submissions should be sent to Paige Fisher and Susan Elliott-Johns at Paige.fisher@viu.ca and susanej@nipissingu.ca.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are interested in exploring the possibility of hosting an ICSEI conference in your country, the guidelines are posted on the ICSEI website www.icsei.net and you can contact Jenny Lewis at the ICSEI Secretariat admin@icsei.net for additional information.

ICSEI participants will be gathering in Glasgow, Scotland in January, 2016. <u>Please view the 2016 conference website</u> for further information and ongoing updates. Hope to see you there.

