

Editorials

Abdulai Abukari

Editor-in-chief

email: abdulai.abukari@buid.ac.ae

Policy makers, practitioners and researchers in the education sector across the globe are continuously re-examining educational policies and practices in an unprecedented fashion in order to sustain quality of education in the current challenging times occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic. The current issue of the Journal for Researching Education Practice (JREPT) presents papers from practitioners relating to perspectives and practices on improving student learning and teaching practice.

In the first paper, Almotairi and Gaad examine the views of adolescents with cognitive disabilities and their parents on the inclusion of such adolescents in various sport programmes in selected educational institutions in Dubai. Based on a purposeful sampled of adolescents and their parents from selected schools and centres, the authors conclude that participants consider inclusion of adolescents with cognitive disabilities in sport programmes as essential and has a wide range of impact including forming and sustaining friendships, motivating students in many ways and developing their self-esteem. The second paper, by Shayma Ebrahim Alawadhi, investigates the influence of an admission policy on a group of university students in the UAE through a survey-like study of 76 students. The survey focused on the following three aspects of the admission policy to determine the degree of influence on students: (1) Student's self-efficacy (2) Motivation and performance (3) Career choice. While the finding shows that admission policy did not restrict students' degree choices; it did not necessarily impact on university students' self-efficacy and degree choices. The third paper evaluates and analyses an 'Online Teaching Practicum' policy for higher education in the UAE. Based on analysis of the policy document and informed by the author's professional practice, the paper argues that the policy follows the elite and top-down approach to policy development which has resulted in some opportunities and challenges in achieving its objectives. The paper concludes by highlighting the importance of involving implementers in the policy development process and drawing on experience from similar policies to make the policy effective and achievable. The last paper, by Haya Alnuaimi, assess a reform of the Intensive English Language Program (IELP) in a federal higher education institution in the UAE. The approach draws on the author's experience in the Intensive English Language Program as well as uses analytical models in curriculum evaluation to achieve its aim. The paper, among other things, concludes that the time designated for each cycle of the Intensive English Language Program level 2 curriculum is not enough to achieve all the learning outcomes mentioned in the curriculum. Hence proposes further development of the IELP level 2 curriculum.