

## Editorial Introduction

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The central objective of creating the Journal of *Contemporary Issues in Education* was to establish an interdisciplinary forum for discussions and criticisms that pertain to the general areas of educational and social development research and analysis. This idea and its practical results, which at least for this endeavor, begin with the online publication of this first issue of the journal did not, of course, begin, academically speaking, in a detached writing or analytical domain. Indeed, the journal's overall perspective is to selectively respond to the realities of the academic department in which it is located. The Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta is an interdisciplinary department that houses several areas of study that especially pertain to Adult Education, Educational Administration and Leadership, Indigenous People's Education, and Theoretical, Cultural and International Studies in Education. While this first issue may not contain articles or ideas from all four areas (and that is not the objective of any one issue or volume), it, nevertheless, espouses a generalist *foci* that bring together discussions and analyses that deal with learning and life areas that are immediate and that should add a lot to our continuing discursive and pragmatic relationships with educational programs and global human development.

It is in that spirit, which this inaugural issue contains three substantial articles and two book reviews. In the first article, Tuourouzou Some looks at issues of gender bias and educational possibilities in Burkina Faso. Some analyzes policies related to the case that have been undertaken by the government of Burkina Faso, which were intended to deal with realities of the current imbalance in the country's educational platforms. In the ensuing discussions, Some notes how girls are not getting their fair share of the educational pie, and suggests new ways of re-doing the learning space by seeing beyond the physical aspects of educational programs. In the second article, Edward Shizha examines ways of achieving the legitimacy of indigenous knowledges in learning situations in Zimbabwe by engaging a theoretical discussion of the *problematique* of colonial education and the still not so decolonized realities of postcolonial education. In elaborating on these, Shizha examines the expansive and still present effects of hegemonic knowledge systems, and suggests ways of delegitimizing these including the possible incorporation of indigenous learning programs into current platforms of schooling. He also notes how the realities of African education which have a sizable component of informal learning possibilities would relate more effectively to educational relationships that are more indigenous and community-wise, more inclusive. This article also proposes the hybridization of knowledge to give voice to formerly marginalized epistemic categories in the school curricular.

In the third article, Gamal Mostafa focuses on the experiences of Arab Muslim graduate experiences in a Canadian university. The specific institution Mostafa looks at in this study is the University of Alberta where he is a post-doctoral fellow. In his discussions of the case, Mostafa explores the students' experiences as these relate to cultural differences and how people adjust to those differences. In addition, he analyzes language difficulties that some students encounter, and looks at ways of adapting to new supervision, funding and study categories and relationships. In analyzing these issues, Mostafa used semi-structured interviews, and at the end makes some important recommendations that should lead to better outcomes for both students and the university. Such an understanding should also be important in realizing the need to still appreciate and highlight the constructive sides of difference in educational settings, especially with respect to recent global events that might not have been helpful in this regard.

In all, the three articles, by analyzing the situations of women's and girls' education, by highlighting the need for the *pronto* indigenization of learning possibilities in time-wise, postcolonial situations that are in reality, still true to their colonial legacies, and by discussing the situation of foreign students in a Canadian university with recommendations for ameliorating the situation for these students and the institution in which they are located, should collectively illuminate more positive venues and intersections of educational and social well-being. That and similar endeavors will be, as indicated above, the main philosophies and operational categories that guide this journal.

Ali A. Abdi, Editor