



The Gulf Comparative Education Society



THE FIFTH ANNUAL  
GULF COMPARATIVE EDUCATION SOCIETY SYMPOSIUM

LOCATING THE NATIONAL IN THE INTERNATIONAL:  
COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON LANGUAGE,  
IDENTITY, POLICY, AND PRACTICE

April 8-10, 2014

Dubai Women's College, Higher Colleges of Technology  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

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Dear GCES Delegates,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Dubai, and the Higher Colleges of Technology. I hope you enjoy the hospitality for which the country is renowned.

The Higher Colleges of Technology is the largest tertiary education institution in the UAE with over 21,000 students studying at the Diploma, Bachelor's and Master's level in Engineering, Business, Computer Information Science, Applied Communications, Health Sciences, and Education. We pride ourselves on our close contacts with both industry and community, and our graduates are keenly sought by employers often before their final year.

We are delighted to be hosting the Fifth Gulf Comparative Education Society Symposium from Dubai Women's College under the auspices of our General Studies Faculty. We are looking forward to three days of informative input and lively debate.

**Dr. Phil Quirke**

Executive Dean of General Studies & Education, Higher Colleges of Technology



The Gulf Comparative Education Society

### *Welcome to the Gulf Comparative Education Society*

On behalf of the Gulf Comparative Education Society (GCES), I would like to welcome all delegates to the 5th Annual GCES Symposium. Founded in 2008, the GCES is a non-governmental professional society that was formed to enable academic, professional and educational discourse, from a comparative stance, with a focus on the Gulf region. The Society aims to promote and develop collaborative and individual research activities that explore educational issues by hosting a series of academic events to address context-specific educational issues in the Gulf region, connecting academics, researchers, policymakers, educators and others and providing members with access to resources and research publications. In 2010 the GCES formally became a full member of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies.

The GCES has held four successful annual symposia in different Gulf countries (UAE, Bahrain, & Oman) and this year, the 5th Annual Symposium is taking place at the Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT), Dubai Women's College, in the United Arab Emirates. The theme of the 5th Annual Symposium is "Locating the National in the International: Comparative Perspectives on Language, Identity, Policy, and Practice." This year's symposium will examine issues relating to language and cultural heritage in the context of the creation of inclusive and outward looking educational spaces. As countries in the region seek simultaneously to preserve their local traditions and culture while embracing modernity and globalisation, challenges inevitably arise, particularly in the education sector. In bringing together academics, researchers, policymakers, and educators to compare educational policies and practices across the region, the symposium aims to explore some of the issues surrounding language, identity, and education in the GCC.

This year's event was made possible with the generous support of HCT and Dubai Women's College and the continuous dedication and support of the Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research which continues to play an important role in shaping educational policy in the UAE and the greater Gulf region. Middlesex University Dubai has also been an instrumental supporter and sponsor of the symposium.

Thank you all for coming to our event. I am sure you will find the sessions we have planned for you informative, stimulating, and inspiring.

**Dr. Christina Gitsaki**

GCES President

Associate Dean of Foundations, Higher Colleges of Technology, UAE

## Keynote Speaker

### Dr. Tony Townsend

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Dr. Tony Townsend has worked all over the world from Macau to Mongolia, from Fiji to France and from Brazil to Belarus. He has been a professor at Monash University in Australia, Florida Atlantic University in the USA and, most recently at the University of Glasgow. He has been President of the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI), and President of the International Council on Education for Teaching (ICET). He was made a life member of ICSEI in 2011. He has been a visiting professor in Michigan, USA; Pretoria and Durban in South Africa; Saskatoon, Canada; Macau; Malaysia; Brno, Czech Republic; and Dublin, Republic of Ireland. He has been the Australian Council for Educational Leaders' Travelling Scholar, has managed 5 major international conferences and presented or consulted in over 60 countries for Ministries and departments of Education, for UNESCO, the British Council and the Commonwealth Education Trust. He has published 11 books and numerous articles and papers in the areas of school effectiveness, school improvement, leadership, teacher education, and community education and development, in Australia, Europe and North America.

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## Thinking and Acting both Locally and Globally: Engaging Students in the Global Classroom.

In 1993 Peter Drucker argued "Every few hundred years in western history there occurs a sharp transformation." The problem is that these transformations seem to be coming quicker and quicker, and as Alvin Toffler pointed out (more than forty years ago), if we have to put up with too much change in two short a time, we experience "future shock".

When we think about how we might go about improving student learning, one simple way to open people's eyes is to ask the question 'What can a 15 year old do or experience today that you could not do when you were 15?' Given a few minutes to think about this, they will come up with a series of responses such as 'iPhones', 'Facebook' 'laptop computers' and so on. It is clear that teachers recognise that there has been substantial change in the types of technology available to young people today, most of which we as adults feel less comfortable about than they do. However, we also start to recognise that it is not just technology that has changed, but pretty much everything else too, some of it on the back of technology, but other things not so. Perhaps the thing that has changed least is the classroom that students work in and the teaching techniques that we use.

We need to face the fact that with globalisation happening, whether we like it or not, in the real world, that it is time that we start to think about what this means for our classrooms. This presentation will consider issues of change, why we need to change mindsets to think differently about our teaching and to consider what types of teaching strategies might be used in a 'global' classroom.

# Invited Speakers

## Dr. Keith M. Lewin

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Professor Keith Lewin is the Professor of International Education and Development at the University of Sussex. He founded the International Masters programme at Sussex and has Directed the Centre for International Education for 17 years. He is a specialist in educational planning, economics and financing, teacher education, and science education policy. He has extensive experience of education systems in Sub-Saharan Africa, South and South East Asia, and China and has worked extensively with DFID, the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, AusAID, and many national governments. He was a co-convenor of roundtables on financing education at both the Jomtien (1990) and Dakar (2000) World Conferences and was senior advisor on educational financing for expanded secondary education to the World Bank Secondary Education in Africa programme, and for Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan in India. Since 2005 he has directed the DFID supported multi-country Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) which has involved over 150 researchers across nine countries and has produced 23 new PhDs and extensive research outputs (see [www.create-rpc.org](http://www.create-rpc.org)). He sits on the research board of the Privatisation of Education Research Initiative (PERI) of the Open Society Foundations.

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## Does Privatising Educational Services for the Poor Make Sense?

Over the last decade there has been a growing interest in the role that for-profit private providers of educational services can play in universalising access to basic education in low income countries. The mechanisms suggested include promoting “low price private schools for the poor” and supporting the public financing of privately managed schools using vouchers or other financial instruments. Neither approach offers a panacea to complex problems. Both may encourage rent seeking at the expense of the poor and neither yet demonstrate the ability to reach out to those currently excluded from education in low and middle income countries. Rights to basic education should not be rationed by price and the provider of last resort will always be the state.

This paper makes the case for continued emphasis on public financing and provision of basic education to promote equitable development. In so doing it accepts that private interests can and do have roles to play in educational development in low-income countries. However, there are limits of capacity, motivation, and financing that mean that the provider of last resort will always be public in all but the most fragile state. Access to education of the poorest will be best served by public investments that prioritise equity and are directed at redressing imbalances. More generally basic education is a public good that is part of the social contract between states and their people to provide services financed by taxation in the collective interest. Social justice and social cohesion depend on the provision of educational public goods.

### Dr. Abdullah Alajmi

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Dr. Abdullah Alajmi is an anthropologist with interests in development, economic culture, migration, sociolinguistics. He was initially trained in the United States in anthropology and oral history and has worked in the American South in a major project to collect the oral history of the civil rights movement in Mississippi. In the US, his first Master's thesis examined a relationship between cultural genres and state politics. Dr. Abdullah moved to the London School of Economics (LSE) where he wrote another Master's thesis on the problematics of state development in Kuwait. At LSE, his PhD was an ethnographic research among Yemeni immigrants in Kuwait in which he examined the values and practices of a peculiar culture of dependency that developed throughout the history of Hadrami migration to Kuwait. Currently, Dr. Abdullah is the Assistant Director of Academic Affairs at the Arab Open University of Kuwait. He also teaches courses on Arab development, globalization, and foundations in open learning.

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### **Non-Profit, Private, Open Education: The Challenge of Sustainability in the Experience of the Arab Open University in Kuwait**

As a development project, the Arab Open University in Kuwait (AOU-KWT) assumes an important role in educational processes and outcomes offering non-profit open learning to all individuals. Its mission is to contribute to the development of human capital in the Arab countries by disseminating knowledge and developing skills and abilities, regardless of impediments of time or place and in accordance with international quality standards. AOU's development mission and flexible methods, however, seems inconsistent in its educational environment. Such inconsistency stems from two factors. First, being the only private university of its kind in Kuwait which attracts the largest number of students in its sector, AOU nonetheless has to operate alongside revenue-driven institutions. This led many educators to look at AOU-KWT as yet another market competitor. Second, the AOU has to abide by national policies that stress the supremacy of traditional learning methods as the only valid mode of education. State regulations regarding open education exercise pressure on AOU works. Thus, the objectives of AOU encounter recurrent obstacles, the most important of which is how open education may be sustainable in such environment. Shown will be the potentials that open learning has in terms of opportunities, flexibility, and innovation in relation to the existing development frameworks. It will be argued that for the AOU project to be educationally 'competitive', hence sustainable, it has to stimulate, to influence, and to actively participate in the wider socioeconomic and cultural development process in its locality.

### Dr. Calvert W. Jones

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Dr. Calvert W. Jones is an assistant professor of political science at The City College of New York (CUNY). She earned her Ph.D. in political science from Yale University in 2013 following master's degrees from Cambridge and U.C. Berkeley and a bachelor's degree from Columbia. Her current research examines international development, top-down social engineering, and the fashioning of market-friendly cultures in the Middle East. Earlier research focused on international security, transnational networks, and the social and organizational drivers of innovation. She has also worked in international development in Vietnam and the Balkans, focusing on fund-raising and women's entrepreneurial development. Her research has appeared in *International Studies Quarterly*, *International Security*, and the *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*. She is currently working on a book project entitled "Bedouins into Bourgeois: Kings, Experts, and Citizen-Making in the United Arab Emirates."

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### Learning to Lead? Praise, Intrinsic Motivation, and Citizen Entitlement

Arab education reforms, especially in the Gulf, have included an emphasis on cultivating leadership skills in the rising generation. As reforms unfold, students have been immersed in an increasingly urgent discourse of leadership, as it is impressed upon them that they will be expected to lead their countries toward bright, post-petroleum futures, marked by vibrant private sectors and an ethos of entrepreneurialism. The enthusiasm for leadership comes not only from governments in the region, but also from the philosophy of the new student-centered teaching methods, which implicitly promote leadership through their emphasis on praise and self-esteem. Yet, in the countries where those methods originated, they have been criticized in recent years on the basis of social psychology research showing that even very well-meaning praise intended to build self-confidence in an educational context can deplete work ethic and reduce the intrinsic motivation to achieve, thus undermining true leadership potential. In my presentation, I examine these potential risks and unintended consequences in relation to Arab education reforms and report the results of two experiments I conducted in the UAE and Jordan, respectively. The experiments assess the effects of different forms of praise on student attitudes associated with leadership, including entrepreneurialism, work ethic, and achievement motivation. I conclude with a discussion of policy implications and areas for future research on education reform, motivation, and the making of citizens in the Middle East.



### Glen Poole

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Glen Poole is a pioneering voice in the world of gender equality with a unique ability to connect the many different factions of the “global men’s movement” in pursuit of better outcomes for men and boys in areas like health, fatherhood, education and personal safety. He is based in the UK where he hosts the annual National Conference for Men and Boys, is a lead co-ordinator for International Men’s Day in the UK and globally and runs the consultancy Helping Men. Glen is committed to building a dynamic global network of professionals and experts to spread best practice and help tackle the major gender inequalities that men and boys experience including lower life expectancy, poor educational outcomes; high male suicide rates and violence against men and boys. He is the author the books Equality For Men (published 2013); Helping Men (published March 2014) and Integral Gender Theory (September 2014).

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### **What Causes Boys to Fail or Succeed? An Integral Analysis of Gender Inequalities in Educational Outcomes**

There is a growing trend across modern economies for girls to outperform boys at every stage of education. As areas where women and girls have experienced gender equality are addressed, a gender gap in educational performance appears that disadvantages men and boys.

The cost of missing out on educational opportunities can have a significant and lasting impact on both the individuals and society. Poor educational outcomes have been linked to poor health, low income, higher unemployment and an increased risk of committing crime or being a victim of crime.

Various theories have been put forward to explain why this gender gap in educational performance emerges including the feminization of educational environments, unhealthy masculinities, a lack of male role models, gender stereotype threat and the absence of male-friendly pedagogies.

This paper reviews the validity of these causal explanations through the lens of integral gender theory and offers insights on advancing educational gender equality in ways that benefit men, women and society. In making this assessment the paper will present some current data from both Western economies where girls outperform boys and developing nations where boys outperform girls and contrast these trends with relevant data from GCC countries.

## GCES 2014 Symposium Program

*Locating the National in the International: Comparative Perspectives on Language, Identity, Policy, and Practice*

### Pre-conference Workshop Day One: Tuesday, April 8th, 2014

13:00 - 13:30	Registration Open	Reg. Hall
13:30 - 14:30	Session 1: Data Analysis Techniques in Educational Research	Main Hall
14:30 - 15:00	Coffee Break	Reg. Hall
15:00 - 16:00	Session 2: Designing and Using Effective Surveys in Applied Research	Main Hall

### Day Two: Wednesday, April 9th, 2014

8:00 - 8:50	Registration Open	Reg. Hall
8:50 - 9:00	<b>Welcome to Dubai</b> (Philip Quirke, <i>Executive Dean of General Studies &amp; Education, Higher Colleges of Technology</i> )	Main Hall
9:00 - 9:10	<b>Introduction to GCES</b> (Christina Gitsaki, <i>GCES President and Associate Dean of Foundations, Higher Colleges of Technology</i> )	
9:10 - 10:00	<b>Plenary</b> <i>Chair – Christina Gitsaki</i>  <b>Tony Townsend</b> ( <i>University of Glasgow</i> ) – Thinking and Acting both Locally and Globally: Engaging Students in the Global Classroom	
10:00 - 10:30	Coffee Break	Reg. Hall
10:30 - 11:45	<b>Featured Panel 1: Shaping Identity: Influences and Role Models</b> <i>Chair – Susan Kippels</i>  <b>Calvert W. Jones</b> ( <i>The City College of New York</i> ) – Learning to Lead? Praise, Intrinsic Motivation, and Citizen Entitlement  <b>Natasha Ridge</b> ( <i>Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research</i> ) – Education and the Reverse Gender Divide in the Gulf States: Embracing the Global Ignoring the Local  <b>Martin Ledstrup</b> ( <i>University of Southern Denmark</i> ) – National Identity and Sociology of Locality: Ras Al Khaimah as a Place Study	Main Hall

11:45 - 13:00	<p><b>Featured Panel 2: International Trends: Regional Realities</b>  <i>Chair – Kay Sanderson</i></p> <p><b>Glen Poole</b> (<i>Helping Men</i>) – What Causes Boys to Fail or Succeed? An Integral Analysis of Gender Inequalities in Educational Outcomes</p> <p><b>Georgia Daleure, Rozz Albion, &amp; Khaleel Hinkston</b> (<i>Higher Colleges of Technology</i>) - Family Involvement in Emirati College Student Education: Influences Linked to Ineffective Career Preparation and Unemployment</p> <p><b>Nagwa Megahed</b> (<i>The American University in Cairo</i>) - Toward a Culture of Gender Equality in the Arab World: Lessons Learned from Decades of Conflicting Discourses and Educational Reforms in Egypt</p>	Main Hall
13:00 - 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>	Dining Hall
14:00 - 15:15	<p><b>Breakout Session 3.1: Identity, Employment, and Inclusion in the Arab World</b>  <i>Chair – Martin Ledstrup</i></p> <p><b>Nahed Shalaby</b> (<i>American University in Cairo</i>) – Factors Influencing Egyptian Youth’s Identity</p> <p><b>Oonagh McGirr</b> (<i>Bahrain Polytechnic</i>) – Towards the Construction of a Professional Development Framework for Middle East Higher Education</p> <p><b>David Jones</b> (<i>The Talent Enterprise</i>) – Youth and Female Inclusion in the Arab World: Its Impact on Employability, Engagement and Productivity in the Workplace</p> <p><b>Clare Walsh</b> (<i>Bahrain Polytechnic</i>) – A ‘Critical Cultural Political Economy of Education’: A Theoretical Framework for Understanding and Explaining how the Structures, Mechanisms and Processes of the Global, Geo-regional, National and Local Assimilate in GCC Higher Education.</p>	Hall 2
14:00 - 15:15	<p><b>Breakout Session 3.2: Locating Accreditation in Higher Education in the MENA Region: Why? When? And For Whom?</b>  <i>Chair – Alyea James</i></p> <p><b>Boyce C. Williams</b> (<i>The National Alliance of Learning, Inc.</i>) – Navigating International Accreditation: From Idea to Action - the Importance of Building a Strong Foundation</p> <p><b>Marilyn R. Davis</b> (<i>Multicultural Education Center Researcher</i>) – The Jordanian Experience in Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions</p> <p><b>Majed Abujaber</b> (<i>The Arab Open University</i>) – Higher Education Accreditation: Diversity Meanings and Indigenous Meanings of Diversity in the United Arab Emirates</p>	Hall 3

14:00 - 15:15	<p><b>Breakout Session 3.3: Constructing Teacher Identity</b> <i>Chair – Luke Zimmerman</i></p> <p><b>Mick King</b> (<i>Middlesex University Dubai</i>) – Tertiary Content Teacher Views on English Medium Instruction in the UAE</p> <p><b>Melanie van den Hoven</b> (<i>Emirates College for Advanced Education</i>) – The Use of English for Education in the GCC: An Ethnographic Investigation of Female Emirati Pre-service Teachers’ Perspectives of English as a Medium of Instruction</p> <p><b>Asif Ahmed Khan &amp; Pir Suhail Ahmed</b> (<i>King Abdul Aziz University</i>) – Self-perceptions of Non-Arab Non-Native English Speaking Teachers</p> <p><b>Shifa Desai</b> (<i>Higher Colleges of Technology</i>) – Links between language learning, imagined identity and investment theory</p>	Hall 4
15:15 - 16:30	<p><b>Breakout Session 4.1: Intersection of the National and International in Higher Education</b> <i>Chair – Daniel Kratochvil</i></p> <p><b>Abdelrazak M. Elsagheer</b> (<i>University of Florida</i>) – The Academic Involvement of GCC Students at the University of Florida: Locating the National in the International</p> <p><b>Ghadah Al Murshidi</b> (<i>UAE University</i>) – Gulf Region Students’ Classroom Participation Challenges at U.S. Universities,</p> <p><b>Aleya James</b> (<i>Higher Colleges of Technology</i>) – Creating the Student-Subject: Governmentality and Higher Education in the United Arab Emirates</p> <p><b>Alfred Miller</b> (<i>Higher Colleges of Technology</i>) – Building Dynamic Capability: Benchmarking Learning by Doing through Business Simulation</p>	Hall 2
15:15 - 16:30	<p><b>Breakout Session 4.2: Perspectives on Student Learning and Curriculum</b> <i>Chair – Ali Ibrahim</i></p> <p><b>Joanne Seymour</b> (<i>University of Bath</i>) - Motivation of Emiratis students learning Arabic</p> <p><b>Maria Theresa Brewster</b> (<i>Higher Colleges of Technology</i>) – It’s Only Luck, Miss: Emirati Narratives of Learning</p> <p><b>Faten Abdel-Hameed &amp; Salah Emara</b> (<i>University of Bahrain</i>)- Quantitative Analysis of Cycle-2 Primary Science Textbooks in Bahrain: For Reflection of Reform</p> <p><b>Ashish Ranjan</b> (<i>University of Delhi</i>) &amp; <b>Kundan Prabha Sinha</b> (<i>Cambridge High School, Abu Dhabi</i>) – Subaltern Spaces: Experiences from School History Curriculum of India</p>	Hall 3

15:15 - 16:30	<b>Breakout Session 4.3: Exploring Teacher and Student Identity</b> <i>Chair – Soha Shami</i>  <b>Joy Pattisson</b> ( <i>Higher Colleges of Technology -DWC</i> ) – How Do Teacher Identities Explain Teacher Perspectives on the Incoming Dual Language Policy in Abu Dhabi Secondary Schools?  <b>Veena Raigangar</b> ( <i>University of Sharjah</i> ) – Reflective Journal: A Tool to Enhance Use of Language and Expression of Identity and Culture  <b>Taghreed Masri</b> ( <i>American University of Sharjah</i> ) – Level of Proficiency and Identity of Emirati Students in UAE Public Schools  <b>Amira Abdou</b> ( <i>American University in Cairo</i> ) - Locating Egypt in the Regional and International Contexts: Comparative Perspectives of Policy and Practices of School-based Professional Development	Hall 4
16:45	<b>End</b>	

Day Three: Thursday, April 10th , 2014		
9:00 – 9:10	<b>Announcements</b> <i>Soha Shami</i>	Main Hall
9:10 – 10:00	<i>Chair – Natasha Ridge</i>  <b>Keith M. Lewin</b> ( <i>University of Sussex</i> ) – Does Privatising Educational Services for the Poor Make Sense?	Main Hall
10:00 – 10:30	<b>Coffee Break</b>	Reg.Hall
10:30 – 11:45	<b>Panel 5 (featured): Local Interpretations of International Education in Kuwait</b> <i>Chair – Cambria Russell</i>  <b>Abdullah Alajmi</b> ( <i>Arab Open University</i> ) – Non-Profit, Private, Open Education: The Challenge of Sustainability in the Experience of the Arab Open University in Kuwait  <b>Ahoud Alasfour</b> ( <i>University of Melbourne</i> ) – Higher Education Privatization in Kuwait: A Study in the Processes of Policy Production  <b>Ilene Winokur</b> ( <i>Specialized Solutions</i> ) – From Centralized Education to Innovation: Cultural Shifts in Kuwait's Education System	Main Hall
11:45 – 13:00	<b>Panel 6 (featured): Research and Education in the UAE</b> <i>Chair – Mick King</i>  <b>Kay Sanderson</b> ( <i>Middlesex University Dubai</i> ) – Academic Research in the United Arab Emirates – Challenges and Opportunities  <b>Christina Gitsaki &amp; Matthew A. Robby</b> ( <i>Higher Colleges of Technology</i> ) –Teacher Attitudes Towards Mobile Learning  <b>Cambria Russell</b> ( <i>AURAK</i> ) – Examining the Accuracy of Teacher Self-Assessment: Implications for Reflective Teaching	Reg. Hall
13:00 – 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>	Dining Hall

## Speaker Abstracts

14:00 – 15:00	<p><b>Panel 7.1: Shaping National Student Identity</b> <i>Chair – Calvert Jones</i></p> <p><b>Dala Farouki</b> (<i>University of Exeter</i>) – The Answer to Strengthening National Identity in the UAE – Character Education</p> <p><b>Waheed Hammad</b> (<i>King Faisal University</i>) – Adjusting the ‘International’ to Fit the Conservative ‘National’: The Case of International Schools in Saudi Arabia</p> <p><b>Rabaa Alsumaiti</b> (<i>British University in Dubai</i>) – Narratives of the Maps: Emirati Undergraduate Students’ Stories of National Identity</p>	Hall 2
14:00 – 15:15	<p><b>Panel 7.2: Exploring Education Administration: Quality Improvement and Communication (Arabic &amp; English Panel)</b> <i>Chair – Abdullah Alajmi</i></p> <p><b>Ali Al-Matari</b> (<i>Ministry of Education, Oman</i>) – Methods of Developing Administrative Innovation from the Perspective of School Administrators in the Northern Al-Sharqyah Region</p> <p><b>Ali Ibrahim &amp; Sherin Mahmoud</b> (<i>UAE University</i>) – Principals’ Communication Styles and School Performance in Al Ain City Schools, UAE</p> <p><b>Aswan Hamza</b> (<i>University of Aden</i>) – Obstacles to the Application of Total Quality Management: A Case Study of a University in Yemen</p>	Hall 3
14:00 – 15:15	<p><b>Panel 7.3: Education Reforms, Policies, and Shaping Identity</b> <i>Chair – Nagwa Megahed</i></p> <p><b>Andrew O’Sullivan</b> (<i>Higher Colleges of Technology</i>) – UAE Education Policy: Impact of External Influences</p> <p><b>Salha Issan</b> (<i>Sultan Qaboos University</i>) &amp; <b>Nariman Gomaa</b> (<i>Kafr-Elsheikh University</i>) – Transparency and Resistance in Education: Do Reforms in Education Lead to Citizen Participation</p> <p><b>Shaojin Chai</b> (<i>University of Notre Dame</i>) – Cultivating Cosmopolitan Arabs</p> <p><b>Teresa Hsieh</b> (<i>Griffith University</i>) – Perspectives of Male Muslim Refugees on English Language Training Programs Offered to Assist with Settlement in Australia</p>	Hall 4
15:15 – 16:30	<p><b>Panel 8.1: Arabic and Identity Formation</b> <i>Chair – Ghadah Al Murshidi</i></p> <p><b>Zeineb Al-Hilali</b> (<i>Exeter University, UK</i>) – Towards Enhancing the Status Quo of Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL)</p> <p><b>Melanie Gobert</b> (<i>Higher Colleges of Technology</i>) – Language Learner Literature, Course Books, and Identity</p> <p><b>Glenn Tucker &amp; Kimary Shahin</b> (<i>CNA-Qatar</i>) – A Report Of Empirical Data On Use Of Students’ Native Arabic As a Pedagogic Device During EFL Instruction In Qatar</p> <p><b>Khawlah Ahmed</b> (<i>American University of Sharjah</i>) – Language and Identity in Education</p>	Hall 2

15:15 – 16:30	<p><b>Panel 8.2: Assessment Issues in UAE Schools (New Scholars Panel)</b>  <i>Chair – Cambria Russell</i></p> <p><b>Noora Abdulla Al Belooshi</b> (<i>American University of Ras Al Khaimah</i>) – The Implementation of Formative Assessment in Cycle One Schools</p> <p><b>Asma Abdulla Al Belooshi &amp; Reeham Mohamed Hamdy</b> (<i>American University of Ras Al Khaimah</i>) – Constructive Feedback as Part of the Learning Process: Two Action Research Studies</p> <p><b>Maha Saleh Al Mulla</b> (<i>American University of Ras Al Khaimah</i>) – Student and Teacher Perceptions of the Criteria for Evaluation of Physics Projects</p>	Hall 3
16:30 – 16:45	<p><b>Concluding Remarks</b>  <i>(Kay Sanderson, GCES Vice President and incoming President as well as Programme Coordinator BA Early Childhood Studies and Senior Lecturer at Middlesex University Dubai)</i></p>	Main Hall
16:45	End	

### Poster Session - Available both days on display (Room TBA)\*

**Sarah Hopkyns** (*Zayed University, Abu Dhabi*) – A Conflict of Desires: English as a Global Language and Its Effect on Culture and Identity in the UAE

**Senabil Al-Hussaini & Jessie-Lea Howells Spenceley** (*The British University in Dubai*) – An Account of TVET Educational Policies in the UAE

*\*Poster authors will be available to discuss their work during the coffee breaks*



# Pre-conference Workshop

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## Session 1: Data Analysis Techniques in Educational Research

This session will provide an overview of the important factors in the process of performing research and preparing and analyzing your research data. It will provide examples and demonstration of the use of the SPSS software for generating statistical output. The session will share the advantages and effective use of basic techniques in performing educational research; for example, involving use of frequencies, chi-square and phi, t-tests, ANOVA, ANCOVA, and effect sizes. Factors for consideration will be discussed for controlling threats to the validity of research findings. The session will cover basic terms and concepts in a user friendly way. Participants will have the opportunity to strategize and discuss application of techniques in their projects and to receive feedback on plans and helpful suggestions.

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## Session 2: Designing and Using Effective Surveys in Applied Research

This session provides training and enhances knowledge of best practices in designing survey instruments and systems. The session provides training regarding user-friendly formats, types of scales, balance and mid-points, scale constructs and index scores, time and memory relevance, types of validity, alpha scale reliability, use of open-ended items, sampling techniques and issues, margin of error calculations, and effectively analyzing and reporting results. Key features of the Survey-Gizmo software are demonstrated as an effective tool for electronic administration and processing.

## Matthew A. Robby

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**Matthew A. Robby's** expertise is in leadership, applied research, and evaluation sciences. He is currently the UNESCO Chair of Applied Research in Education for the Higher Colleges of Technology in the United Arab Emirates. Before that, he served as the Supervisor of Applied Academic Program Research for the Higher Colleges of Technology (2011-2013), Executive Director of Evaluator Services in California (2008-2010), District Program Evaluator for Riverside County Public Schools (2000-2008), and Research Associate (1997-2000) at California State University. Dr. Robby has performed over 100 process/impact studies for school districts, government agencies, colleges and universities, and community-based programs. He has received a number of national and regional awards during his career. He is a member of the American Evaluation Association and the International Development Evaluation Association.





# Speaker Abstracts

## FEATURED PANEL 1

### Shaping Identity: Influences and Role Models

#### Education and the Reverse Gender Divide in the Gulf States: Embracing the Global Ignoring the Local

*Natasha Ridge*

In the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the gap between male and female school enrolment and educational achievement continues to widen in favor of girls (Mullis, Martin, Foy, & Arora, 2012). However, nowhere in national or international reports and discourses is this phenomenon mentioned beyond dismissive comments to the effect that the culture or boys and their families are largely to blame (Al Munajjed & Sabbagh, 2011). There is little acknowledgement that gender disparities are largely the result of structural issues connected to political, economic, and social factors (Stromquist, 2012). International educational target-setting, as found in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), coupled with prevailing Western stereotypes of the oppressed Muslim woman and oppressive Muslim man have contributed to a situation by which the Gulf states are unable to examine issues relating to males without appearing even more misogynistic than they are already perceived (AbuKhalil, 2005).

Through a critical examination of modernization theory and discourses around gender and education, this book utilizes a mixed-methods comparative approach to examine the creation of a reverse gender gap in education in the GCC. Micro-data was collected from students, parents, teachers, faculty, and education policy makers. This was complemented by macro-data from GCC country-level education plans and reports from international organizations.

The book finds that even though countries in the GCC are not aid recipients, they still speak the language that donor organizations and other international development organizations wish to hear regarding gender (Ridge, 2009; Chabbot, 2003). The result has been a myopic, one-sided approach to gender issues and a focus on girls' education in the face of increasing educational inequalities for boys. The book finds that this may have a significant impact in terms of private and social returns to education and serious implications for Gulf society as a whole. It provides recommendations and, from a broader standpoint, is of significance for the field of comparative education as it explores how international discourses can narrow the focus of country level education policies to issues that may not be of relevance to them.

**Natasha Ridge** is the Executive Director of the Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research

## National Identity and Sociology of Locality: Ras al Khaimah as a Place Study

*Martin Ledstrup*

When media and academic articles frame national identity talk in the United Arab Emirates, they tend to do so in a particular way: namely, by reducing it to a question about a bounded Emirati identity group alienated and threatened by the arrival of migrants. By drawing in ethnographic field work from higher education in the emirate of Ras al Khaimah, however, I challenge this form of sociological reductionism. I do so through a twofold argument. First, ethnography in situated education milieus indicates that the imagination of national identity boundaries in Emirati-non-Emirati encounters is not a constant in interaction, but something that happens. Identity in interaction is a question of waxing and waning contingency: it is a matter not of identity, but of identitarianization of actors by actors. The second part of my argument is that one critical primary locus in the variability of identitarianization is in the significance of locally specialized publics and rooted markets for interaction rituals. Localities, that is, are crucial sociological arenas for the negotiation of order: at the local level, macro-level framings of national identity are affirmed, challenged, nuanced, and always processed.

*Martin Ledstrup is a visiting scholar at Sheikh Saud bin Saqr al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research*

### FEATURED PANEL 2

## International Trends: Regional Realities

## Family Involvement in Emirati College Student Education: Influences Linked to Ineffective Career Preparation and Unemployment

*Georgia Daleure, Rozz Albon, & Khaleel Hinkston*

The social structure in United Arab Emirates (UAE), and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, is based on tribal familial affiliations in which opinions and viewpoints of parents and other family elders heavily influence the decisions of younger Emiratis. At the same time, rapid and progressive economic development has caused social transitions in which each consecutive generation is raised with a vastly different set of social circumstances than the preceding generation. This study investigated the types and intensity of family involvement in

Emirati college student education, family involvement associated with high and low achievement, and family involvement influencing career preparation. Links were examined between family involvement and high unemployment among Emirati young people, a pressing concern for policy makers in the GCC region.

A bilingual online survey was given to 1173 Emirati college students with 66 items in two parts; a) demographic questions and b) rating questions examining type and intensity of family involvement behaviors, and examining students' attitudes and opinions. Guardians of 30 randomly selected guardians answer an Arabic phone survey. Data were examined using: a) descriptive statistics and correlations for an overview and b) composite indicators to examine the association of differing demographic variables and family involvement behaviors on student achievement and students' attitudes and opinions.

The results of the study showed that families of Emirati college students tended to provide abundant financial and emotional support but often lacked ability or willingness to provide effective academic support. Further, evidence from the study suggests that some family involvement behaviors may contribute to students developing counter-productive workplace attitudes and decision-making processes about program choices and career planning. Policy makers can use the study's recommendations to channel family involvement into more effective academic support and to develop attitudes about work that align more closely to the Leadership's economic vision for the country.

**Georgia Daleure** is the Academic Success Advisor for Sharjah Men's College, HCT, and Faculty Member in the General Studies Department.

**Rozz Alboni** is a teacher of Educational Theory and Methodology at Sharjah Women's College.

**Khaleel Hinkston** is a counselor at Sharjah Men's College, HCT.

## Toward a Culture of Gender Equality in the Arab World: Lessons Learned from Decades of Conflicting Discourses and Educational Reforms in Egypt

*Nagwa Megahed*

International support for gender equality has existed for some time. Women's educational rights have received global attention. In 1990, the international Education for All (EFA) movement has emphasized equality and quality of education and pledged to achieve gender parity by 2015. With a focus on Egypt and despite reform efforts supported by donors, gender disparity has remained strongly present in education. Considering the dual role of education as an agent of cultural change and/or perpetuation, female education in Egypt has been supported by fundamentalist groups, national government, and the international community. This, I argue, has created conflicting discourses and reforms that continue to hinder the achievement of gender equality. This study engages a discourse analysis of these issues and provides evidence for the persistence of gender disparities in pre-university education in Egypt.

The study is contextualized in the national, regional and international efforts in the pursuit of gender educational equality, highlighting the position of Egypt in the Arab and global gender gap index. Depending on secondary data analysis, the study identifies differences occurred in female versus male participation in education since 1990 to present in Egypt. In addition, qualitative data was collected from a sample of 20 female university students through focus group discussions and a survey with open-ended questions to illustrate their perceptions of women's rights and their roles and social responsibilities in promoting gender equality in the current transitional period in Egypt. The study findings emphasized the urgent need for genuine gender-oriented educational reform that helps creating a culture of gender equality.

**Nagwa Megahed** is an Associate Professor and Director of the Comparative & International Education Research Center at the Graduate School of Education (AUC).

### BREAKOUT SESSION 3.1

## Identity, Employment, and Inclusion in the Arab World

### Factors Influencing Egyptian Youth's Identity

*Nahed Shalaby*

This paper attempts to present a single case-study to measure the relation between gender, age, socio-economic background and parental education on the national identity of Egyptian youth. In this research paper I focused in depth on a stratified sample of 26 students aged 15 and 16 in an International school. I implemented both quantitative and qualitative methods, as together they enable deep investigation in revealing the Egyptian identity aspects. The study includes a questionnaire and interview with two parents whose children showed variation in answers. The Quai square test and probability are used to measure the relation between the study's sample age and identity level which indicates that age has no effect on identity. The results show that family occupies first place importance on influencing the way youth see the world. Then technology, followed by media and last comes peers' influence.

The relationship between father's education and mother's education on identity level reveal no significant difference. Limitations of the study are discussed including the sample of the data and analysis of results.

**Nahed Shalaby** is an instructor at the Graduate school of Education in the American University in Cairo.

## Towards the Construction of a PD a framework for a Middle East HE

*Oonagh McGirr*

This research paper reports on the trajectory of a recently established HEI in the Middle East and the challenges faced in embedding PBL as the underpinning methodological approach for Teaching and Learning.

This paper documents the implementation and subsequent review of teacher training and development activity at a tertiary education provider analyzing it in student centred learning (SCL). The paper seeks to draw from the research evidence base to propose a way forward in establishing a professional development (PD) framework which supports the continuing training and upskilling of teachers at Bahrain Polytechnic. The paper documents the chronology of such work in response to institutional research, operational challenges and ongoing review.

The paper reports on the proposed adoption of a transitional professional development approach to provide sustainable PD in support of the facilitation of student centred learning at Bahrain Polytechnic. It seeks to document the process thus far, report on the updated intra-institutional research findings and the subsequent attempt to construct a framework to support the implementation of a sustainable training and development offering for academic staff.

*Oonagh McGirr is the Manager of Teaching and Learning at Bahrain Polytechnic.*

## Youth and Female Inclusion in the Arab World: Its Impact on Employability, Engagement and Productivity in the Workplace

*David Jones*

Qudurat or 'capacities / capabilities' in Arabic was a longitudinal research study dedicated to understanding what drives and motivates national and expatriate talent in the region. This research was conducted in two waves, in 2010 and again in 2012, across 7 countries (Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Egypt). To date, this is the first and largest study of its kind seeking to enhance employability and HR practices across both private and public sector through evidence-based research.

The total n size for the study was analyzed. 20,500 respondents, representing over 150 organisations. The study design focused on analyzing 22 research variables, including aspects such as engagement, identity, relationships and strengths such as self-efficacy, resilience and preparedness. The 2012 study has a total n size of 15,900 responses, out of which 14,292 were from the GCC, with 6790 nationals and 7542 expatriates. The paper will refer to results from youth where the n size for Under 25's = 1040, and 25-34 years = 3376, as well as females, where the n size = 3649.

This paper will describe the research approach, share its major results and findings especially on the perspectives of youth and females in the Arab World. There will be particular emphasis and reference to the regions changing educational, demographic and talent landscape, along with their impact on employability, job creation, employee engagement and productivity.

All of these factors are of increasing interest and priority for policy-makers, analyzing ion leaders, educational professionals and individuals across MENA. The paper concludes with practical recommendations and priority actions for each of these key constituent stakeholders within the regions dynamic talent landscape.

Key findings:

- The younger generation of nationals is significantly less engaged than the older generation.
- There has been a visible and significant decline in youth engagement (Under 25's) from 2010 to 2012.
- Surprisingly, amongst all age groups, those under the age of 25 and especially those in the 25 – 34 year age groups report the lowest level of acceptance with diversity.
- 86.7% of GCC nationals working in the public sector believe their work is making their country or community a better place, as compared to 66.6% of nationals in the private sector.

*David Jones is an HR Leader with a background in labour market economics.*

## **A 'Critical Cultural Political Economy of Education': A Theoretical Framework for Understanding and Explaining How the Structures, Mechanisms and Processes of the Global, Geo-regional, National and Local Assimilate in GCC Higher Education.**

*Clare Walsh*

Contemporary education policy at the international level has witnessed the emergence of a globalised policy discourse which is reshaping education systems, resulting in a globalised education policy field positioned between the tensions of global pressures and local responses. Global policy themes, agendas and processes interact with values, traditions, ideology and institutions. It is the extent of these interactions that require analysis and evaluation, as there is uncertainty over how the transmission of the global to national, local to national or national to global occurs.

A global education agenda exists in the GCC and if there is a desire for local responses, it is necessary to understand and explain how the structures, mechanisms and processes of the global, geo-regional and national assimilate. Theoretical frameworks such as 'World Polity Theory' (Meyer et al, 1997), 'World Systems Theory' (Wallerstein, 2004) and 'Structured Agenda' (Dale, 2000) have

been well utilized in explaining the globalisation of education however they are difficult to apply in the context of Arab higher education.

The theoretical framework 'Critical Cultural Political Economy of Education' (CCPEE) (Robertson and Dale, 2013) offers an alternative to the above mentioned theoretical accounts which focus on either the political and economic, or political and cultural, but to the exclusion of one of the trio and therefore offering only a partial understanding of the education ensemble. This theoretical approach, by employing the political, cultural and economic in a critical framework, can offer a wider view of the complexity of the 'structures, institutions and practices' within the education ensemble.

By applying the CCPEE framework in the context of Arab higher education, this paper seeks to demonstrate how the framework can be applied and how it can offer researchers greater certainty over how the transmission of the global to national, local to national or national to global occurs.

*Clare Walsh is a tutor - Management major at Bahrain Polytechnic.*

## BREAKOUT SESSION 3.2

### Locating Accreditation in Higher Education in the MENA Region: Why? When? And For Whom?

### Locating Accreditation in Higher Education in the MENA Region: Why? When? And For Whom?

*Boyce C. Williams, Marilyn R. Davis, and Majed Abujaber*

Over the past several years, many of the MENA national governments, and some members of the public in the MENA region, have focused on quality assurance of their educational systems, both public and private. A number of countries (for example Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Egypt, Oman?) have established national accreditation bodies to oversee the development and implementation of individual educational institutions and ensure the quality of the educational systems in place. Key targets are university and college departments that offer programs for professionals.

Understanding how institutions and governments look upon accreditation begins with understanding the interplay between knowledge and authority and the ways accreditation is reified across the MENA region. We address the following questions: 1) How can accreditation best be defined in relation to preparation of educators? 2) In trying to build a system of quality assurance and a continuum of professional education programs, what are the implications for in-service education? 3) How can MENA participants harmonize the myriad of accreditation initiatives in the region at the national level to optimize the outcomes of these initiatives?



Survey and interview data were collected across nine countries in English and Arabic. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with consenting participants. Findings showed the importance of program stature; program alignment with established accreditation organizations; the development of baseline data structures and; a desire to align programs with established accreditation organizations.

An international panel of educators will discuss the diverse ways in which accreditation noticeably links to local beliefs about what constitutes quality and who the granting agency is. Each of the nine countries that participated in this study is uniquely different with its own sets of norms, rules, and expectations. This shared knowledge mediates how MENA nations and members of the MENA region define accreditation and enact it in their respective institutions.

**Boyce C. Williams** is an International Education Consultant.

**Marilyn R. Davis** is an educational researcher at the University of New Mexico.

**Majed Abujaber** is a full Professor and the dean for the Faculty of Education at the Arab Open University.

### BREAKOUT SESSION 3.3 Constructing Teacher Identity

## Tertiary Content Teacher Views on English Medium Instruction in the UAE

*Mick King*

The use of English medium instruction (EMI) in the UAE federal tertiary sector is a major policy decision. Its use is logical with multinational student bodies but has been contested globally when used in educational settings where students share the same mother tongue. Recent UAE media reports have highlighted the language of instruction debate in the Emirati tertiary context but until now there has been little published research into this phenomenon and none which looks at teachers' views. This study aimed to address this lack.

A qualitative exploratory approach was adopted to shed light on the main EMI themes that resonated with content faculty in tertiary settings with Arabic mother tongue students. The conceptual framework of the study was built on the researcher's own experiences working in such environments, literature on themes related to those experiences and the results of an open questionnaire to which 43 teachers responded. The resultant themes from the framework, which included issues of language proficiency, national identity, the position of Arabic in society and teacher and student coping strategies, were employed in semi-structured interviews with 9 content teachers from the purposive sample.



The most significant results indicate that there are widely ranging views on the relevance of EMI in such settings with some suggesting that alternative methodologies such as a bilingual approach may reap more rewards in both Arabic and English proficiency. Linked to this, the use of Arabic in the English only tertiary classroom is generally seen as a legitimate tool for facilitating learning.

EMI in Arabic mother tongue tertiary settings is a common occurrence across the GCC but recent moves in some countries have indicated a possible shift to Arabic medium instruction. This study offers important insights from teachers' perspectives on future directions in this field.

**Mick King** is a Lecturer in Foundation, Language and Education at Middlesex University (Dubai Campus).

## The Use of English for Education in the GCC: An Ethnographic Investigation of Female Emirati Pre-service Teachers' Perspectives of English as a Medium of Instruction

*Melanie van den Hoven*

One feature of the internationalization of higher education is the adoption of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) to teach content courses (Knight 2004; Coleman, 2006). While the widespread adoption of EMI in higher education represents one of the most significant trends governing the spread of English around the world today (Graddol, 2006), little is known about the perspectives of students towards the use of EMI in Arabian Gulf universities. According to linguists, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), in particular, merits closer examination because of speculation that English use in this context may be changing status change from foreign language to second language. (Graddol, 2006). Given the considerable investment in the UAE tertiary education sector, including accreditation with international partners (Davidson, 2009) as well as the introduction of new learning outcomes supporting bi-literacy in English and Arabic in primary education in Abu Dhabi government schools (Gallagher, 2011) it is timely to examine 'what is at stake' for those required to learn English and learn to teach using EMI. This presentation shares the finding generated from four focus group discussions and highlight the perspectives of female Emirati pre-service teachers at a teacher's college in Abu Dhabi. As the first phase of data collected for a larger ethnographic study, the presentation draws upon the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of social constructionism (Berger and Luckman, 1971) and the discourses of World Englishes (Sergeant, 2012) to describe prevailing conceptions of English as a default lingua franca and the experience of EMI as a distinct language mode nested within broader patterns of Arabic and English use. In light of these social dynamics, intelligibility is favoured over accuracy in face-to-face interactions and parents and educators who safeguard linguistic boundaries are highly valued.

**Melanie van den Hoven** is a part-time doctoral student and a English Studies instructor in the B. Ed program at ECAE.

## Self-Perceptions of Non-Arab Non-Native English Speaking Teachers

*Asif Ahmed Khan & Pir Suhail Ahmed*

The present study investigates the self-perceptions of non-Arab Non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) teaching in Intensive English Language Programs in Saudi universities. Until the turn of the 21st century NNESTs were regarded unequal to performance of NESTs in knowledge and performance thus diminishing their self-confidence because of the perceived inferiority of NNESTs to NESTs.

The existing body of research on native non-native dichotomy is structured around two approaches: 'self-perceptions of NNESTs' and 'students' perceptions of NNESTs'. The term NNESTs in the existing body of research is applied to those teachers who share L1 with their students but there are thousands of NNESTs who do not share L1 with their students as Asian teachers teaching English Language in Saudi universities. This is a somewhat neglected area and hence a research gap.

English Language has been introduced as a compulsory subject in the Foundation Year in all Saudi universities since 2007. Due to the lack of Saudi English teachers, the program administrators were left with no other choice but to recruit both native and non-native expatriate teachers including Arabs and non-Arabs. The strength of NESTs is English being their mother-tongue whereas the strength of Arab non-native teachers is Arabic being their mother tongue. The strength of non-Arab NNESTs is yet to be determined in the field of English language teaching.

This study not only points out the self-perceptions of non-Arab NNESTs but it also provides ample illustrations on the strengths of these teachers in the field of Non-Arab NNESTs can be excellent teachers if appropriately qualified and experienced in the field of TESOL. The existing body of research in this domain provides an ample amount of evidence that the identity of English teacher, regardless of being native or non-native, is not important rather it is the personality of being professional and qualified.

**Asif Ahmed Khan** is a lecturer and Senior Academic Coordinator at English Language Institute, King Abdul Aziz University, Saudi Arabia.

**Pir Suhail Ahmed** is a language instructor at the English Language Institute, King Abdul Aziz University, Saudi Arabia.

## Links Between Language Learning, Imagined Identity and Investment Theory

*Shifa Desai*

Some language learners are motivated by the prospect of their future possible selves integrated in their imagined communities of hope. How does this imagined identity shape the consciousness and desires of the language learner? In this small-scale qualitative study on non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) the researcher examines how language learners form their identities in relation to their goals and how their imagined hopes and desires shape their investment in language learning. Drawing on contemporary theories of motivation and imagined identity, the results of this investigation showed that imagined identity serves as an ongoing character trait long after the goal of proficiency in the L2 has been achieved. The question the researcher hopes to raise in this presentation is to what extent can teachers mediate imagined identity for a globalizing education. Perhaps now the concept of dynamic citizen gains further significance as the UAE gears up to meet the demands of EXPO 2020. The nation requires an educated citizenry that maintains its cultural and ideological authenticity but also functions fully in a wider global context through English lingua franca.

*Shifa Desai is a teacher in the HCT Foundation Program at Fujairah Women's College.*

### BREAKOUT SESSION 4.1

## Intersection of the National and International in Higher Education

## The Academic Involvement of GCC Students at the University of Florida: Locating the National in the International

*Abdelrazak M. Elsasgheer*

According to 'student involvement theory', highly involved students are those who devote considerable energy to their studies and interact frequently with their faculty staff members and other students. Conversely, typical uninvolved students neglect their studies and have infrequent contact with their faculty staff members or other students. Thus, the greater students get academically involved in their studies, the greater will be the amount of students' learning and academic growth.

The main purpose of this research paper is to depict a 2 semester-long study of a random sample of GCC students studying at the English language Institute at the University of Florida in the United States of America during the fall and spring semesters of 2013-2014 in order to investigate the degree of their academic involvement throughout an activity-based model of student involvement theory. The current paper is mainly guided by the following two questions:

1. What do GCC students report about their academic involvement at the University of Florida?
2. What differences do exist between what GCC and international students report?

A random sample of 146 international students participated in this research study. The different types of academic involvement are measured by a 4-point rating scale including some curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities related to the topic of students' academic involvement. These activities were selected according to the appropriateness of research objectives, their fit with the academic topics taught, and existing data showing high reliability.

Data was collected by a face-to-face questionnaire and analyzed statistically by the Statistics Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). The preliminary results revealed that the majority of GCC students were academically involved in their studies, with their faculty members, and with other students. Also, GCC students were nearly equal in the degree of academic involvement to the other international students of the same group of research.

**Abdelrazak M. Elsagheer** is a research scholar and staff member at the University of Florida.

## Gulf Region Students' Classroom Participation Challenges at U.S. Universities

*Ghadah Al Murshidi*

The purpose of this comparative study is to explore the major factors affecting Emirati and Saudi Students academic experiences in the U.S. Universities. More specifically, the purpose is to explore speaking, presentation, participation and socialization challenges in their classrooms. The theoretical orientations framing this study are language socialization, Language adjustment, and academic socialization. The study combined quantitative and qualitative strategies involving surveying 400 students followed by interviewing six students. Content analysis is used to interpret the data. Some major findings of the survey are that Emirati students "rarely" feel that native English speaking students are more competent than they are in classes. However, Saudi students "occasionally" feel that native English speaking students are more competent than they are in classes. Emirati and Saudi students feel "less comfortable" participating in large group discussions, and "comfortable" participating in small group discussion in classes. Emirati and Saudi students are "less comfortable" completing presentations assignments. However, interview results show more stories of the Emirati and Saudi students' experiences in depth. Researchers found several factors that influence the cultural adjustment of international students. Some of these factors are language differences and skills . As a Saudi student, Khalifah, indicated his experience with silence

upon arriving in the U.S. language preparation program due to language differences. He is fluent in his native language “Arabic” and trying to improve his English proficiency. Adjustment required time to adopt the speaking language. This study is crucial for illuminating crucial the situations students who lack certain linguistic and academic capital necessary to successfully function in their disciplines. The study implies that Gulf region students’ sponsors and policymakers in the Higher Education ministries should prepare them to learn new skills and adjust to the educational system of the American universities, which is different from that in their native countries.

**Ghadah Al Murshidi** is an Assistant Professor at United Arab Emirates University.

## Creating the Student-Subject: Governmentality and Higher Education in the United Arab Emirates

*Aleya James*

This paper analyses the Higher Educational (HE) landscape of UAE federal tertiary institutions through a Foucauldian-inspired governmentality analysis. Using Kiersey’s definition of governmentality analysis as “a method of inquiry that allows us to understand the narrow strategic vision of a governmental rationality along with the wider set of practices and intimate mechanisms of power that conspire in effecting this strategy” (Kiersey, 2009, p.385). This is a framework that focuses on the relational and productive nature of power and particularly on “technologies of the self” Lemke (2002 p.5).

Using UAE Vision 2021/Emirati Charter as policy discourse I argue that there are two main strands of government rationality; firstly, neo-liberal rationalizations which are two-fold – the knowledge economy and the entrepreneurial self and secondly, the rationalizations of legitimacy: security; welfare and care; and national identity and culture. These are held together by the cultural glue of allegiance, loyalty, duty and gratitude. Drawing on personal observation and experience, interviews and information sessions, web-based media statements and documents on organizational web-sites I examine how these rationalities play out in HE giving concrete examples of each one. I then demonstrate how they impact on the subjectivity of the student-citizen.

I conclude by discussing the feasibility of creating inclusive and outward-looking educational spaces in this specific HE setting and suggest that government rationalities and perspectives may need to be modified if this is, truly, their purpose.

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**Aleya James** is a General Studies Faculty member at the Higher Colleges of Technology, Dubai, Women’s Campus and a doctoral student at the University of Bath, UK.

## Building Dynamic Capability: Benchmarking Learning by Doing through Business Simulation

*Alfred Miller*

This study investigates development of an instrument and process to comparatively evaluate a teaching program for business simulation class that enables both internal benchmarking across a large campus system as well as validation against a global standard.

A quantitative exploration is used to test a series of experiential and assessed outcomes for factor congruence to validate both path analysis and aggregated factor models. These models demonstrated how student participation in CESIM business simulation, at Higher Colleges of Technology, connected the learning-by-doing experience to student achievement, in comparison to both coursework and final assessment. The constructs tested were based on student's experiential learning, and their assessed processes of operating routines, knowledge articulation, and codification, through the theoretical perspective of the dynamic capability model.

ACBSP programmatic business accreditation requires comparative internal benchmarking to demonstrate consistency across the 17 campus system, and external benchmarking to validate learning against an external standard. To this end, three GCC partner universities, all from the International Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP Region 8), one from each of Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, expressed interest in collaboration. Initial results from the effect-based, path analysis model, demonstrated that the experiential factors of the simulation were responsible for 19% of the variation in the coursework score, while coursework and experiential factors, were responsible for 25% of the variation in system-wide assessment scores. Furthermore, the partially aggregated, latent variable model achieved adequate fit between simulation experience and earning assessment.

This study uses new data to test the evolution of previously proposed theoretical models from the 2013, Best Paper of the International Conference, ACBSP Region 8, to connect experiential, learning-by-doing to assessed outcomes, toward validation of a business simulation course through cross-system and GCC Regional benchmarking. These measures are required for ACBSP business program accreditation.

**Alfred Miller** leads HCT's Business Division's accreditation efforts, with the Global Programmatic Accreditation Agency ACBSP.

## BREAKOUT SESSION 4.2

### Perspectives on Student Learning and Curriculum

#### Motivation of Emiratis Students Learning Arabic

*Joanne Seymour*

Since the mid-1990s, much has been written on the field of second language acquisition motivation. Building on current theories such as Ushioda's 'person-in-context' (2009) and the socio-dynamic foundations of Dörnyei's L2 Motivation Self System (Dörnyei 2009, 2010a, Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011), this research seeks to explore the motivational orientations of Emirati students learning Arabic in the distinctive educational context of Dubai.

There are concerns that English is replacing Arabic at every level of society and Badry discusses "the alarmingly decreasing proficiency levels in Modern Standard Arabic literacy among younger generations" (2012:98), with grade 10 Emirati students in her research unable to correctly recite the Arabic alphabet. In a situation where 95% of Emirati students entering higher education need Arabic remedial courses in their foundation year, concern is growing for levels of communication skills in current students' formal Arabic (Al Amiri 2012).

My research aims to investigate how previous research on L2 (second language) learning motivation can help us to understand the situation of these Emirati students learning Arabic, their national language. As an avid language learner and Arabic speaker who appreciates the correlation of English-medium schooling on Emiratis' varying levels of Arabic, it also interests me personally to investigate this area further.

Both the context of Dubai's linguistic landscape and the use of qualitative data collection methods are under-represented in published literature. Despite moves towards using socially grounded approaches to SLA since Firth and Wagner first pushed for more "holistic, bio-social" research instead of looking at individual-based constructs (1997:296), the majority of research on L2 motivation is quantitative in nature. According to Bassiouney, "linguists working on the Arab world nalyzin that a blind application of methods and theories constructed for the west would not work for the different Arab countries" (2009:274) and perhaps more so in the context of Dubai.

*Joanne Seymour is a Manager (Strategy, Research and Engagement) at Knowledge & Human Development Authority.*



## It's Only Luck, Miss: Emirati Narratives of Learning

*Maria Theresa Brewster*

Learning is the act or process of obtaining knowledge. It can be systematic or through the consolidation of learned activities or behaviors. Since its founding the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has been committed to developing and enhancing its education system. The Ministry of Education's mission is to prepare UAE nationals for jobs of the future. UAE learners have grown accustomed to teacher fronted classrooms throughout their formative education, yet once they arrive at college they are introduced to a new model of learning. This new model requires them to be active participants in their learning. Many Emirati learners appreciate the change while others continue to subscribe to a getting-by-style of classroom discourse. This study investigates Emirati learners' beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of how people learn at the Higher Colleges of Technology. The researcher analyzes the results of a structured survey through the use of Gardner's socio-educational model of language learning. Interviews and classroom observations are used to explore ways in which the notion of learning is culturally mediated. Sociocultural theory is the researcher's investigative tool for understanding how cultural factors influence the attitudes towards learning. As corollary, this study points to possible instructional approaches that support HCT's learning model.

*Maria Theresa Brewster is an English Language Instructor at the Higher Colleges of Technology.*

## Quantitative Analysis of Cycle-2 Primary Science Textbooks in Bahrain, for Reflection of Reform

*Faten Abdel-Hameed & Salah Emara*

Researchers in science education recognized the importance of analyzing the contents of science textbooks. Similarly, educational reform documents emphasized the crucial role the textbooks play in improving science education. Science educators agree that textbooks play an important role in the teaching and learning processes (Koppal & Caldwell, 2004; Clement, 2008). The international organization such as UNESCO formulated comprehensive strategy and guidelines on textbook research and AAAS's Project 2061 developed analysis protocols to evaluate the instructional effectiveness of the science textbooks. Since the textbooks are being used as a major source of information in teaching a particular subject, the quality and accuracy of the content is crucial for their educational effectiveness. Numerous research studies have been conducted on science textbooks analysis in the past several decades. Researchers looked into the readability level (Ninnes, 2000), gender equity (Elgar, 2004), questioning nature, location and cognitive levels (Davila, 2010), graphical representations of concepts (Slough, 2010), and scientific terms load.

The overall objective of our study is to explore the effectiveness of Cycle-2 Primary Science textbooks and workbooks in terms of their reflection of the Bahrain Ministry of Education's school and curriculum reforms. The purpose of this paper is to quantify the nature, location and



cognitive levels of the questions of the newly developed Cycle-2 primary science textbooks and the accompanying workbooks. Twelve Science textbooks and workbooks were examined using an author-developed questions analysis grid. Descriptive statistical analysis was performed.

Results show the following distribution of categories of questions and problems: knowledge, 40.5%; comprehension, 33.6%; application, 17.3% ; analysis, 4.8%); synthesis, 0%, and evaluation, 3.8%.

**Faten Abdel-Hameed** is an Associate Professor in the Math, Science and ICT Academic Group, Bahrain Teachers College, University of Bahrain.

**Salah Emara** is the Director of the Studies and Research Unit at the University College of Bahrain.

## Subaltern Spaces: Experiences from School History Curriculum of India

*Ashish Ranjan & Kundan Prabha Sinha*

This paper looks at the school history curriculum of India and advocates the need for a more comprehensive curriculum and critical pedagogy to understand a plural social context and power structures. It examines the curriculum as a socially analyzing knowledge and reflects upon the degree to which curriculum enables subaltern spaces post National Curriculum Framework (2005).

The theoretical framework draws from Kandel's (1955) understanding through historical contexts; Giroux (1981) and Apple's (1990) perspectives on curriculum as an inherently political act; Bray and Thomas (1995) cube for multi-level analysis; and subaltern perspectives of Guha (1994), Ilaiah (2007). This qualitative research engages with content analysis of textbooks, policy documents, socio-demographic profile of learners, observation of classroom processes and interaction with different stakeholders.

Major findings and educational implications:

- The selection, sequence and scope of content in the curriculum is shaped by the nature of the state. History shapes children's socialization. However, the historical representation of the subaltern groups remains inadequate and subsumed within the 'grand narratives' of history with certain notable omissions and silences.
- History as a discipline based on evidences and shaped by dominant knowledge systems creates challenges for locating histories of the 'other'.
- A centralized examination system promotes a text book culture nurturing a homogeneous history.
- Learners with their primary analyzing ion at their homes are in conflict with the grand narratives in the official curriculum.
- Inadequate teacher preparation and classroom practices fail to clarify on the 'multiple pasts' and re-examine the status quo.

History curriculum across political divisions ought to acknowledge 'new sources' and diverse cultural heritage, celebrate constructionism and establish a sense of self-identity mediated by

multiple social layers and categories. The Issues of equality, equity and social legitimacy translated into curricular policies are significant educational interventions towards creating inclusive and outward looking educational spaces. (300 words)

**Ashish Ranjan** is an Assistant Professor at C.I.E., Faculty Of Education, University Of Delhi.

**Kundan Prabha Sinha** is a secondary school teacher of history, MUN, and Face to Faith Coordinator.

### BREAKOUT SESSION 4.3 Exploring Teacher Identity

## How Do Teacher Identities Explain Teacher Perspectives on the Incoming Dual Language Policy in Abu Dhabi Secondary Schools?

*Joy Pattisson*

As part of an education reform programme, Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) are currently introducing a dual language policy (DLP) in which English and maths are to be taught fully through English. This study, drawing on a post structural theoretical framework, sought to ascertain how Emirati female secondary school maths teachers' analyzing ion their professional identities, what their perspectives on the DLP are and how their identities influence these perspectives.

The data indicates recurring themes regarding key aspects of professional identities including the importance of childhood experiences in education, gender roles, Islam, professional roles, relationships with students and their perspectives of society's view of teachers.

Additionally, the study suggests that teachers have fragmented identities resulting in mixed perspectives on the DLP. In some regards, their identities result in positivity towards the policy while they simultaneously feel their identities are threatened in three main ways – by the requirement to alter their current teaching methodology, in their expectation that students will be unable to understand the curriculum material in English and thus fail to acquire the necessary content and in the consequent negative impact such a scenario will have on their relationships with their students.

This study also found differing views regarding the principles behind the DLP. Some teachers were more prone to accept the policy having adopted a position which assumes the neutrality of English while others expressed strong views against the encroachment of English in education and society more generally. By exploring the construct and analyzing teacher identities and relating it to the practical aspect of policy implementation, this study aims to highlight its relevance to education reform and contribute to a gap in the field. It is hoped that through this teacher identity will become a more significant part of the educational discourse across the GCC.

**Joy Pattisson** has a wide range of educational experiences and currently works on the BEd programme at Dubai Women's College.

## Reflective Journal: A Tool to Enhance Use of Language and Expression of Identity and Culture

*Veena Raigangar*

**Background:** Reflective journaling is known to enable students to learn from their own experiences especially in clinical situations. It also provides a means for students whose native language is not English to attempt to write something that is unique and narrated in their own words. It provides the students with a tool to express their own identity and gives them insight into their thoughts and emotions. This tool is additionally known to help develop autonomy and critical thinking.

**Method:** The theoretical basis and use of Critical reflection frameworks such as LEARN together with evaluation rubric for these journals will be discussed.

**Results:** Experiences of implementation and examples of work produced by health sciences students will be discussed together with some guidelines in this population to simplify the process.

**Conclusion:** Pros and cons of use will be highlighted along with some insight into how these journals could be a reflection of student's expression of language, identity and culture, enriching the students university portfolios. Mentoring from senior students or conducting workshops to detail the process of reflective journaling could help enhance the process.

**Relevance to GCC:** It is very common that students don't have any experience in journaling in this region and reflecting on their experiences from childhood is a new concept to many of them making it very difficult to carry out. Implementing such practices even at the level of high school could facilitate greater self awareness at a younger age.

*Veena Raigangar is a Lecturer in the Department of Physiotherapy at the University of Sharjah.*

## Level of Proficiency and Identity of Emirati Students in UAE Public Schools

*Taghreed Masri*

The identity of learners has made its way as a concept that has become central in second language acquisition (SLA) and bilingual education research. More and more the notion that learners' identity is constructed and negotiated through language learning has become widely recognized. Given the 'magic,' power and status associated with English as the global language, its impact may be deeper than that usually associated with foreign language learning. The purpose of this study is to explore how the level of proficiency in both Arabic and English shapes Emirati students' perception of their identity in the United Arab Emirates public schools. The study explores high school students' linguistic preferences and language practices to assess their impact on identity construction. Data collection methods include a students' survey, interviews with students, teachers and an administrator, and ethnographic observation. Results show that students' preferences are driven by their perceived proficiency in both languages. While students are aware of their poor proficiency in English, their relative fluency in Spoken Arabic leads them to believe that they are proficient in

it. In fact, results indicate that students have poor proficiency in both Arabic and English which has created an identity dilemma as they are unable to identify completely with either of the two languages. However, data analysis reveals that English has to a certain extent impacted students' identity because they associate it with modernity and a brighter future, which they want for themselves, while Arabic is associated with respected traditions and values. Findings also show that although students are aware that English is flourishing at the expense of their mother tongue, they still want to learn it and appreciate its culture. Finally, results indicate that the educational policy towards both languages falls short of providing these students an effective bilingual program.

*Taghreed Masri is an instructor in the Department of Writing Studies at the American University of Sharjah.*

## Locating Egypt in the Regional and International Contexts: Comparative Perspectives of Policy and Practices of School-based Professional Development

*Amira Abdou*

At this momentous time in Egypt's history, it becomes imperative for the state to embark on a range of state-wide and institutionalized education reform initiatives with education being the corner stone of all societal reforms. Since it launched its National Strategy for Education Reform in 2007, Egypt has realized the pressing need to shift towards decentralized educational model. Hence, school-based reform becomes key instrumental in achieving that goal. This study focuses on school-based teacher professional development at policy and practice levels.

The purpose of this study is to examine first: the policy discourse for school-based teacher professional development at national, regional, and international levels. This shall help identify the extent to which the government has been adopting school-based teacher professional development approach. Second, the paper explores to what extent this approach has been implemented in Egypt public schools through exploring teachers' perceptions and experiences with school-based teacher professional development by conducting field work in three language urban experimental schools that include elementary, middle and high school levels. Third, the paper intends to identify the gaps between the policy discourse and the practice of teachers at school level in order to come up with recommendation for bridging the gap.

The study follows a qualitative approach that includes document review and conducting individual and focus group interviews using semi structured open-ended questions in addition to the researcher's observation during the school's field visits.

The findings of this study is expected to contribute to the development of better understanding of promoting bottom-up reform policy represented in school-based teacher professional development that would enable teachers to become life-long learners and reflective practitioners. Furthermore, the study aims at bridging the gap between policy discourse and implemented teacher practices with an attempt to come up with recommendations that would close the gap.

*Amira Abdou is adjunct faculty at the American University in Cairo.*

## BREAKOUT SESSION 5

### Local Interpretations of International Education in Kuwait

#### Higher Education Privatization in Kuwait: A Study in the Processes of Policy Production

*Ahoud Alasfour*

Like most countries around the world, the state of Kuwait has over the past two decades experienced a rapid growth in student demand for higher education. The privatization of higher education has been viewed as a way of meeting this demand in most emerging systems where public resources are lacking. However, such financial pressures clearly do not apply in the State of Kuwait. Therefore, this research will seek to identify some of the key reasons why Kuwait decided to pursue a privatization policy in higher education, in order to understand, in a broader sense, the ways in which global processes influence the production of national policies in higher education. More specifically, using the qualitative methods of policy research, the study will examine some of the internal and external pressures that led to the production of a privatization policy in the Kuwaiti system of higher education in 1999 by providing an account of how this policy was developed; who were the main policy players; and what interests the policy now serves. Although there are increasing global trends towards privatization in higher education, the study reveals that there are local specificities promoting such policies in Kuwait, particularly since financial constraints are not applicable in leading to privatization in this context. One of these specificities are the traditional cultural aspects that influence the processes of policy production in Kuwait. The study shows how the forces of globalization influence the processes of higher education policy production in Kuwait – as one of the richest countries in the world – in a different manner from most developing countries. This paper is relevant in that Kuwait, as a member of the GCC countries, not only shares some similarities in culture, tradition and economy, but also in the recent phenomenon of higher education privatization.

*Ahoud Alasfour is a PhD Candidate at the University of Melbourne.*

#### From Centralized Education to Innovation: Cultural Shifts in Kuwait's Education System

*Ilene Winokur*

This study focuses on the historical and cultural contexts surrounding Kuwait's education system and the government's efforts to develop an entrepreneurial mindset. Primary and secondary sources and research in policy borrowing provide context to the problem of systemic change of an education system in a country that is trying to prepare its youth with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in

the 21st century. The commitment to improvement is evident, but the question is whether the political, professional and popular determination is enough to implement the changes into the system and internalize them for sustainable reform. A case can be made that repeated efforts at policy borrowing that resulted in failure to internalize reforms can be used as the impetus for real and sustainable change.

***Ilene Winokur** is the Founder and Managing Director of Specialized Solutions Workplace Training & Development, Kuwait.*

### BREAKOUT SESSION 6 Research and Education in the UAE

## Academic Research in the United Arab Emirates – Challenges and Opportunities

*Kay Sanderson*

This paper focuses on the experiences of these expatriate academics (Richardson 2006, Yeo 2011). It investigates their ability to continue their research interests in the new locale and considers how different policy environments in the new institutions may impact on these research activities. In recent years many universities have expanded their student's capacity through the establishment of a branch campus (Adler 2006).

In the United Arab Emirates, the active development of higher education has seen the recent growth of government sponsored universities and privately funded branch campuses. Emirati and expatriate students have signed up to take the opportunity to obtain a degree without having to travel overseas. Academics have also travelled to the UAE to work in these newly established institutions. However, Altbach (2010) suggests these campuses are unable to emulate the same environment as the parent campus. Teaching, learning and research activities should be the same, but do cultural sensitivities, resource implications and the institutions own policy mandates challenge these happenings or create opportunities for them?

Expatriate academics working in a range of higher educational institutions within the United Arab Emirates contributed to the data. Semi-structured interviews were used to acquire the information and the resultant data was interrogated using the General Inductive Approach (Thomas 2003). The findings demonstrate that many academics found new opportunities for research in the unique environment of the UAE. However many implicated their institution's business orientated policies and focus on the student experience to explain why their research activities had been restricted. Their stories act as a window so one can consider how academic research in the UAE might be further developed and to increase an awareness of how institutional operational policy can impact research output.

***Kay Sanderson** is a Programme Coordinator and Senior Lecturer at Middlesex University Dubai.*

## Teacher Attitudes Towards Mobile Learning

*Christina Gitsaki & Matthew A. Robby*

The impact of iPads on teacher pedagogy is a new area of research given the novelty of the iPads as a medium of instruction. While iPads have been widely adopted in K-12 schools for general education, in the field of English as a Second Language (ESL) there have been only a few cases of adoption and research has been sparse. This session will present a research project designed to elicit teacher attitudes towards the use of iPads for teaching English to post-secondary students. The study took place at one of the Federal Higher Education Institutions in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) after the implementation of an iPad project in the ESL program. Over 320 teachers participated in an online survey which aimed to determine teachers' concerns and attitudes towards the use of iPads for teaching English. A further 132 teachers participated in focus group interviews during which teachers outlined their challenges and benefits after one semester from the implementation of the iPad project. The session will conclude with a discussion of the results and their implications for English language teaching.

**Christina Gitsaki** is Associate Academic Dean of Foundations at the Higher Colleges of Technology.

**Matthew A. Robby** is the UNESCO Chair in Applied Research in Education, Higher Colleges of Technology - Sharjah Colleges.

## Examining the Accuracy of Teacher Self-Assessment: Implications for Reflective Teaching

*Cambria Russell*

This paper explores English teachers' assessments of their teaching practice and compares these results with classroom observations. The data presented are drawn from 164 questionnaires and 80 classroom observations. The study focuses on 94 male English language teachers who work in government schools in RAK, UAE. In the 2012-2013 school year, the teachers in this study participated in a professional development program. The program included fifteen hours of class, homework assignments requiring application and reflection, classroom observations, and feedback sessions. This curriculum focused on reflective teaching practices. Reflective teaching is a means of professional development that entails guiding teachers through evaluating, analyzing, and responding to what is happening in their classrooms (see Brookfield, 1995). Reflective teaching relies on teachers' capability to assess their own abilities. However, results indicate that the teachers were not able to accurately describe their teaching practices. Survey results indicate that the teachers, in general, believe they are using constructivist approaches in their lessons. This is not supported by observation data. This disconnect between the teachers' self-assessments and the classroom observations has important implications for future teacher development and training programs, particularly programs focused on reflexivity. These implications and recommendations are discussed.

**Cambria Russell** is an Assistant Professor of Education and Program Coordinator for the M.Ed. program at the American University of Ras al Khaimah.



## BREAKOUT SESSION 7.1 Shaping National Student Identity

### **The Answer to Strengthening National Identity in the UAE – Character Education**

*Dala Farouki*

The UAE's leadership and its residents know how national identity, language and culture is facing the threat of weakness due to the influx of other cultures and languages. While the UAE welcomes this global identity, what of its local identity? Character education may be the answer to this question. Character education initiatives in institutions of learning would allow for students to focus on their identity and moral development, and how to proactively contribute to society for their and the community's greater good. Discussion will include benchmark examples from studies, as well as how implementation and design of such an initiative would look like for the UAE's specific context. This directly relates to my PhD thesis and I will be discussing my research as well.

*Dala Farouki is an Education Strategy & Management Specialist for the Middle East and North Africa.*

### **Adjusting the 'international' to fit the conservative 'national': the case of international schools in Saudi Arabia**

*Waheed Hammad*

The phenomenon of international schools has been existent since 1964 and has particularly witnessed dramatic expansions over the last few decades. The growing interest in this type of schooling has been triggered by the rising numbers of internationally mobile professionals moving overseas in the company of their families and children. International schools have a multi-cultural student population which now transcends the narrow scope of expatriate elite to include an increasing number of local students. These groups bring to the schools different values, family expectations, belief structures, linguistic backgrounds and learning styles. This poses management challenges to educational leaders, teachers and policy makers.

Although international schools originated in Europe, they are currently spread all over the globe. The kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been no exception to this trend. Due to large numbers of professionals of different ethnic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds moving with their families to the country, the need



for international schools has been crucial. The demand on these schools has also been high among Saudi households and enrollment has recently been opened for Saudi children. According to data from the Ministry of Education, there are as many as 501 international schools in the Kingdom, serving 301,213 students, of which 11,616 Saudis. It could be argued that the expansion of this phenomenon can be problematic in a conservative country like Saudi Arabia which has a set of religious beliefs and cultural traditions that can be in conflict with the culture and procedures prevalent in international schools. This paper examines such a conflict and explores the adjustments made by policy makers and educational leaders to resolve it. The implications of these adjustments for school leaders are also considered.

**Waheed Hammad** is an assistant professor at King Faisal University.

## Narratives of the Maps: Emirati Undergraduate Students' Stories of National Identity

*Rabaa Alsumaiti*

In 1971, the rulers of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) put their national dreams forward and celebrated the federation of the UAE. Since then, the UAE has changed rapidly to become a globalizing country that aspires to achieve international prominence, thereby affecting Emiratis and exposing them to external factors at odds with Emirati values emerging from Muslim and Arab culture. This has caused great concern regarding Emirati youth national identities, and the possibility that they are building weak understandings of their culture and citizenship. This doctoral thesis explores four Emirati female undergraduate students' experiences of national identity through cultural and political symbols.

The theoretical framework is a synthesis of Mead's (1934) and Goffman's (1959) symbolic interactionism and Moscovici's (1988) social representation theory. The study follows a social constructivist methodology based on narrative and ethnography using participant observations, ethnographic interviews, and visual methods to create stories of national identity experiences. The findings demonstrate that the students' experience of national identities in everyday contexts included socially interacting with cultural and political symbols producing an evolving image of the UAE they relate to their objectives and future ambitions. Recommendations include addressing further research and theoretical implications of identity studies in the region, reviewing higher education curricula and youth programmes, as well as the need for a comprehensive cultural strategy in the UAE.

**Rabaa Alsumaiti** is a doctoral student and Head of International Assessments at KHDA.

## BREAKOUT SESSION 7.2

## Exploring Education Administration: Quality Improvement and Communication (Arabic Panel)

## Methods of Developing Administrative Innovation from the Perspective of School Administrators in the Northern Al-sharqyah Region

*Ali Al-Matari*

This study aimed to know the reality of Methods of developing Administrative innovation from the perspective of school administrators in the Northern Al-sharqyah region .and it is consisted of community of (82) male Directors and female Directors, and the number of subjects was (30) male Directors and female Directors.

The findings suggest that there is presence of administrative innovation is “high” to school administrators, with an average overall performance of the subject’s responses to the total dimensions of the device (3.58). As well as ,the results of the study indicated that the dimension of realty of administrative innovation is high to school administrators with average (3.85). The outcome of the study found that the obstacles to administrative innovation had been done by a “medium” rate the arithmetic average of administrative obstacles is (2.86).

As for the dimension of ways to develop administrative innovation in accordance to the views of the subjects they think that all methods mentioned in the study questionnaire lead to developing of administrative innovation, where the total arithmetic average is (4.02). The results of the study also indicated that there was no statistically significant differences at the level ( $\alpha: 0,05$ ) between the sexes in the administrative innovation in all dimensions of the study.

For managerial experience factor results indicated that there was no statistically significant differences at the level ( $\alpha: 0,05$ ) in the dimensions of administrative innovation and it impediments. And also a statistically significant differences at the level ( $\alpha: 0,05$ ) in the dimension of the methods of developing administrative innovation.

For the variable of the educational stage, the results indicated that there weren’t any differences with the statistical significance’s at the level ( $\alpha:0.05$ ) in the dimensions of the study.

## أساليب تطوير الإبداع الإداري من وجهة نظر مديري المدارس في المنطقة الشرقية شمال

*علي المطري*

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة أساليب تطوير الإبداع الإداري من وجهة نظر مديري المدارس في المنطقة الشرقية شمال، وقد تألف مجتمع الدراسة من (82) مديراً ومديرة، وبلغ عدد أفراد عينة الدراسة (30) مديراً ومديرة، التابعين للمديرية العامة للتربية والتعليم بالمنطقة الشرقية شمال.

ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة تم تطوير (استبانة) تقيس أبعاداً مثل: واقع الإبداع الإداري، ومعوقات، وأساليب تطويره. وللإجابة عن أسئلة الدراسة فقد تم استخدام المتوسطات الحسابية والانحرافات المعيارية، واختبار (ت) T-TEST، وتحليل التباين الأحادي (Anova)، وأخيراً اختبار شيفيه (Scheffe Test) للمقارنات البعدية في الحالات التي وجد فيها أن قيمة (ف) ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى الدلالة، ( $\alpha:0,05$ ) وقد أشارت نتائج الدراسة إلى أن هناك وجوداً للإبداع الإداري بدرجة «عالية» عند مديري المدارس، إذ بلغ متوسط الأداء الكلي لاستجابات أفراد عينة الدراسة على الأبعاد الكلية للأداة (3,58). كذلك أشارت نتائج الدراسة على أن بُعد واقع الإبداع الإداري لدى مديري المدارس يعتبر عالياً بشكل عام بمتوسط حسابي (3,85). وتوصلت نتيجة الدراسة إلى أن معوقات الإبداع الإداري كانت محققة بدرجة «متوسطة» حيث بلغ المتوسط الحسابي (2,86). أما بخصوص بُعد أساليب تطوير الإبداع الإداري وفقاً لآراء أفراد عينة الدراسة التي أظهرت بدرجة «عالية»، أن جميع الأساليب المذكور في الاستبانة تطور الإبداع الإداري، حيث بلغ المتوسط الحسابي الكلي للبعد (4,02)، وكذلك أشارت نتائج الدراسة إلى عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى ( $\alpha:0,05$ ) بين الجنسين في الإبداع الإداري وذلك في جميع أبعاد الدراسة. وبالنسبة لمتغير الخبرة الإدارية فقد أشارت النتائج إلى عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى ( $\alpha:0,05$ ) في بعدي واقع الإبداع الإداري، ومعوقات الإبداع الإداري، وأيضاً وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى ( $\alpha:0,05$ ) في بُعد أساليب تطوير الإبداع الإداري. وبالنسبة لمتغير المرحلة الدراسية فقد أشارت النتائج إلى عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى ( $\alpha:0,05$ ) في أبعاد الدراسة.

*Ali Al-Matari is a mathematics teacher at Al-Mutnabi School for Boys (10-12).*

## Principals' Communication Styles and School Performance in Al Ain City Schools, UAE

*Ali Ibrahim & Sherin Mahmoud*

This study aimed at describing principals' communication styles and their relationships to school performance in Al Ain city schools in the UAE. Data were collected first through a questionnaire of 50 items that assessed the communication styles of the principals and the performance levels of the schools. The questionnaire also included three open-ended questions. Six hundred sixty seven male and female staff out of a total population of 2240 staff in 40 schools responded to the questionnaire. Then, semi-structured phone interviews with 11 participants were used to collect qualitative data. The results showed that principals in Al Ain schools are almost always expressive in their communication. They usually practice the styles of supportiveness, preciseness, and niceness. They almost never act aggressively or use emotionality or threat in their communication. The results showed also that participants attributed high performance to the principal's supportiveness style. When the school was used as the unit of analysis, the preciseness style of the principal had the highest correlation coefficient with high performance. In both cases, the expressiveness style of the principal came second in rank correlating with high performance. Finally, the study found that styles of emotionality and threat were correlated negatively with school performance. The study concluded with recommendations for research and practice.

*Ali Ibrahim is an associate professor of education at the United Arab Emirates University.*

*Sherin Mahmoud holds a master's degree in education from the United Arab Emirates University.*

## Obstacles to the Application of Total Quality Management: A Case Study of a University in Yemen

*Aswan Hamza*

The purpose of this study is to highlight the effectiveness of the Injaz Oman program for building and fostering a culture of entrepreneurship among students in higher education institutions in the Sultanate of Oman. The study used a descriptive and quasi-experimental approach with on a sample of students in the Higher College of Technology in Muscat and introduced them to the program –Injaz Oman- in the academic year 2012-2013 in order to teach them how to develop their entrepreneurial skills, promote a culture of self-employment, and train them on how to create small to medium enterprises. The result of the study revealed the effectiveness of the program in providing the students with the basic skills to create small to medium enterprises and promoting self-employment., The study recommends the need to circulate the program to the rest of the higher education institutions.

*Aswan Hamza is an assistant professor at the University of Aden.*

### BREAKOUT SESSION 7.3

## Education Reforms, Policies, and Shaping Identity

## UAE Education Policy: Impact of External Influences

*Andrew O'Sullivan*

The UAE presents clear evidence of education policy influence from elsewhere and the phenomenon as experienced in the UAE context serves to illuminate the relationship between domestic and global change processes: economic, social and political (Evans, 2009) and how a developing national education system fits in “the global architecture of education” (Jones, 2007: 330). Adick (2002) argues we should acknowledge international educational policy convergence, and seek to “understand the mechanisms by which world influences enter our schools” (228). To this end, I investigate why and how the transfer of educational policy and policy practice occurs in the UAE context. There are three key questions:

- What are the mechanisms/forces leading to the adoption of certain policies in the UAE educational sphere?

- What are the linkages between the external policy influences and the UAE domestic policy environment?
- Which policy norms diffuse and matter most?

I argue that an intense desire to achieve a legitimization of educational policy and practice is a key driver in the UAE's openness to certain policy influence and models. The influence of favoured models and practices on UAE's educational policy is aided by a networked consensus of multilateral agencies, arenas of exchange, a best practice/what works rhetoric, and economic and managerialistic ideologies (Peck and Theodore, 2010). A key concern is to try and assess how far the contemporary UAE education polycscape is consistent with UAE societal uniqueness, sensitivities and national priorities.

*Andrew O'Sullivan is the Acting Chair of General Studies at HCT Dubai Colleges.*

## Transparency and Resistance in Education: Do Reforms in Education Lead to Citizen Participation

*Salha Issan & Nariman Goma*

Many educational reforms are introduced in the Arab Gulf States. However, adopting policies of citizen participation to enhance transparency by the policy makers as well as the role of the citizens in adopting these reforms is limited. In fact participation policy can be used as a mean to enhance transparency in education and stimulate quality improvement. Glenn (2012) stated that transparency and public availability of information are highly desirable elements of educational reform. Recommendations by international bodies such as Transparency International regarding Africa (2010) stated "Ministries of education must support a participatory planning process at school where it already exist, and introduce such process where they are not yet in place"(p.25).

Nationals, in these states, claim that many reforms approved by policymakers do not meet their ambitions and needs. As a result, many of these reforms end without achieving their objectives. There is an increasing evidence that much participatory reform is either, superficial, or ineffective (Beare, 1993). The language of participation has penetrated educational discourse on many levels: participatory, site-based management, participatory research, community and parent participation in schools, and teacher empowerment through participatory decision making. Current reform efforts in education are grounded in various mixtures of three kinds of control: (a) regulatory control, (b) professional control and (c) democratic control, which asserts that schools can be improved by increasing democratic control at the school-community level (Elmore, 1991).

In an effort to verify the issue and move toward more authentic forms of participation, the paper will concentrate on answering the following questions:

- Do reforms in education lead to citizen participation?
- What are conditions and processes to be followed at institutional and societal levels to make participation authentic?

- What are the present conditions of citizens' participation in school reforms in the Arab Gulf States?
- What is the appropriate conceptual framework for effective participation to be adapted?

**Salha Issan** is the Director of Quality Assurance Office at Sultan Qaboos University.

**Nariman Gomaa** is a part-time Associate Professor at the Graduate School of Education at the American University of Cairo.

## Cultivating Cosmopolitan Arabs

*Shaojin Chai*

During the last 15 years, the GCC countries have witnessed a boom of higher learning institutions, thanks to importing or introducing Euro-American style universities or programs into the Gulf Region. The two prominent examples are the Knowledge Village/Academic City in Dubai, UAE and Education City in Doha, Qatar. There have been discussions and reflections on how those universities can succeed in implanting or integrating so-called Liberal Education Model into the Gulf environment since such a model has been cherished as an integral of university education in its home countries. What is missing in those discussions is whether and how such a model helps prepare and cultivate better students to face opportunities and challenges of globalization. This paper aims to study cosmopolitan orientation of the humanities education, or humanities component of the general education in the Arabian Gulf universities. More specifically, I want to assess the extent and depth of cosmopolitan orientation, such as promoting global awareness, cultural sensitivity and world citizenship in the humanities education/inclusion in the universities. The central question is whether and how the university education in the region have prepared their students, intellectually and culturally, for an increasing complex, interconnected and globalized world after introducing or integrating the humanities courses into their core curriculum or majors. By investigating the academic settings and curriculum of ten selected universities in the five Arabian Gulf States, I will be able to demonstrate whether their humanities education has contributed to not cultivating not only one's national identity but global citizenship, a belonging to a wider humanity. My study on cosmopolitan orientation of the humanities education/inclusion will provide one of the best possible ways to assess their readiness in this regard. This paper will use cross-sectional comparisons and textual interpretation to evaluate the extent of the cosmopolitan orientation by comparing and contrasting the academic settings and course offerings of humanities programs in those universities based on the data I collected, and draw implications from some existing models in USA, UK, Singapore and India to analyze and contextualize the practices of humanities inclusion and cosmopolitan exposure. I will also examine whether such a cosmopolitan orientation does exist and how deep it is by closely analyzing and interpreting the selected materials in the course textbooks and readings. The findings will also reveal whether the humanities-cosmopolitan education can cultivate more open-minded and moderate citizens.

**Shaojin Chai** is a PhD Candidate of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame.

## Perspectives of Male Muslim Refugees on English Language Training Programs Offered to Assist with Settlement in Australia

*Teresa Hsieh*

Reasonable English proficiency is required to successfully participate in Australian culture and society. The Australian government thus provides English language training for refugees and other newly-arrived immigrant groups. However, this training does not always produce the expected results. This is evidenced for some male Muslim refugees in Australia by a high rate of unemployment despite their continuing (re)attendance at English language programs. This provides the focus for the research question in this study: 'What are the perceptions of male Muslim refugees about the efficacy of English language training programs in facilitating their settlement and employment in Australia'.

Phenomenography guides this research as this methodology allows the researcher to identify diverse and multiple perspectives as they emerge through in-depth interviews. This will allow better understanding of the different interpretations and conceptions of the male Muslim participants about various aspects of Western reality as compared to other communities within Australian society. This thesis aims to understand the degree to which these different ways of understanding reality influence the perceptions of the participants about the efficacy of their English language training in preparing them for settlement into Australian society.

It is anticipated that the findings from this study have potential to influence policy decisions of the Australian government in respect to English language training in Australia. The study may also improve the quality of life for male Muslim refugees by providing opportunity for them to be heard, and for their needs to be taken into account in future policy decisions and teaching practice.

This study has relevance to the conference theme because of its potential contribution to English language training policy and practice in Australia. It will also allow the male Muslim participants to strengthen their social identity within Australian society.

*Teresa Hsieh is a TESOL teacher as well as a doctoral candidate at Griffith University.*



## BREAKOUT SESSION 8.1 Arabic and Identity Formation

### **Towards Enhancing the Status Quo of Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL)**

*Zeineb Al-Hilali*

**Background:** Discussions on learning and teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) often erupt in the media in the UAE. Parents complain that their children aren't speaking Arabic adequately enough even after years of studying it. In order to search for the possible reasons for the lack of ability of speaking Arabic, an empirical research was conducted to assist shedding a light on the status quo of AFL and consequently to recommend possible solutions.

**Methods and Methodology:** The study used a sequential mixed methodology and was conducted at an international school in Dubai on Grade Six, where AFL students were polled, some parents and teachers were interviewed, then classes were observed. The research was conducted in October 2013 after obtaining ethical approval from both University of Exeter, UK where this research formed part of a PhD study, and from the school where it was conducted.

**Results and Conclusions:** Results indicated that the reasons for the student's underperformance in speaking Arabic were due to the lack of teachers' resources to make AFL lessons more interesting and appealing to the students, lack of teachers' training in AFL, the formal – colloquial Arabic dichotomy, and lack of practice of Arabic outside the classroom. Since failing AFL does not affect the child's academic progress, the exams and the syllabus are simplified to enable the students to pass.

**Relevancy to GCC and Recommendations:** Arabic is part of the identity of the GCC countries. When children and their parents at international schools complain of Arabic, they are actually comparing it to English with its up-to-date wealth of teachers' resources, the technology incorporated, and the comparatively better trained teachers. Recommendations included enhancing current text-books, mandatory training courses similar to CELTA, organizations similar to TESOL Arabia, conferences, journals and peer-reviewed journals, continuous mandatory PD courses, and online teacher's aide resources.

*Zeineb Al-Hilali is an Adjunct Faculty at Amity University.*

### **Language Learner Literature, Course Books, and Identity**

*Melanie Gobert*

When students are learning a English as a Second Language or English as a Foreign Language, one of the best motivations is wanting to become acclimated to the culture of the target language, so much so that the learner starts assimilating the speech and dress of their "ideal" L1 speaker. Although some

publishers have made some attempt to publish Language Learner Literature and course books that are more inclusive and representative of learners' cultures, there is a dearth of Language Learner Literature written about or from the contexts of the learners. This is a contradiction because L1 English speakers start off reading stories about people like themselves in their cultural context that have, until recently, even excluded ethnic minorities in L1 English-speaking societies. Most of the Language Learner Literature available is from English and American culture and about English and American culture although there are some exceptions. This presentation reports the findings of a content analysis of recent course books and language learner literature for the inclusion of Arabs, Gulf Arabs, and Emirati culture. The talk will also feature a research study in which Gulf Arab students read short stories and non-fiction books in graded language from and about their culture. The goal of this research is to encourage publishers to represent English as a global language that is inclusive of Arab learners and Gulf Arabs' identity.

**Melanie Gobert** is the president of TESOL Arabia.

## A Report Of Empirical Data On Use Of Students' Native Arabic As A Pedagogic Device During Efl Instruction In Qatar

*Glenn Tucker & Kimary Shahin*

In Second Language Acquisition (SLA), use of the mother tongue (L1) for pedagogic purposes has long been discouraged in favor of methods that promote maximized exposure to the second language (L2) through exclusive use of L2. However, L1 use persists in the classroom amongst both learners and educators. A growing body of research has revealed potentially beneficial uses of L1 in L2 learning. An emerging trend is to acknowledge that judicious L1 use need not be viewed negatively, but can instead enhance SLA and validate and support learners as the bilinguals they are, eliminating unnecessary guilt felt by both instructors and students using L1 based on intuition.

Two problems surround L1 use in SLA. Firstly, although L1 use in pedagogy represents a growth area in research, there is still a dearth of empirical evidence for its benefits in SLA. Secondly, a framework defining 'judicious' L1 use is needed. This presentation reports on a study that addresses the first of these two problems. The aim of the study was to identify preliminary empirical evidence or counterevidence for Arabic L1 use in EFL instruction in Qatar. One lesson on a set of English grammatical structures was presented to two Arabic L1 classes using different methodologies: one version of the lesson used L1 in a manner estimated to be judicious based on suggestions in the literature; the other version was delivered exclusively in L2. Empirical data were obtained through pre- and post-test scores measuring learner progress, and through a questionnaire gauging learner reaction to teaching methodology. The findings of this research enhance teaching methodologies used by instructors in the GCC and inform subsequent materials developed for learners in this region.

**Glenn Tucker** is an EFL Instructor at The College Of the North Atlantic – Qatar.

**Kimary Shahin** is Coordinator of the Independent Learning Centre at the College of the North Atlantic – Qatar.

## Language and Identity in Education

*Khawlah Ahmed*

In contexts where English has become the medium of instruction and not taught as a subject among the many in a curriculum, questions arise as to what can be done to maintain these languages, cultures and therefore cultural identities. Since English has become a necessity in today's globalized world, many see it as a threat to the existence of other languages, and therefore their cultures, and cultural identities. One of the major concerns of countries, such as those in the Gulf, is to maintain their linguistic and cultural identities. One venue that this can be done through is the curriculum. This paper examines a sample of textbooks from the ESL/EFL curriculum that are being taught in the public schools in one of these Gulf countries to see to what degree the local native culture is represented in the curriculum (the distribution of ethnicity between the local native Arab culture and non-Arab culture) using qualitative and quantitative analysis of these texts. Results show that there is minimal to no cultural representations whether it is on the level of in-texts supporting pictures or in-text supporting terms that are representative of the Arab culture. The local native culture is not represented very often and when represented, it is done so in a superficial manner. The study shows that the inclusion of Arabic culture in these EFL/ESL English textbooks leaves room for improvement and calls for further reflection and consideration by policy makers and curriculum developers on the material presented in the textbooks.

*Khawlah Ahmed is a professor of English at the American University of Sharjah.*

### BREAKOUT SESSION 8.2 Assessment Issues in UAE Schools (New Scholars Panel)

## Assessment Issues in the UAE

*Noora Abdulla Al Belooshi, Asma Abdulla Al Belooshi, Reeham Mohamed Hamdy,  
& Maha Saleh Al Mulla*

This panel includes the work of four Masters students. Each student will present action research projects related to student assessment.

Individual presentations are: Implementation of Formative Assessment in Cycle One Schools – This research was conducted to investigate how effectively formative assessment is implemented in the United Arab Emirates' government schools (Cycle one, English subject). Ten English teachers

participated in the research process. The investigation indicated the missing of a key element of formative assessment is feedback. In addition, through analyzing the collected data many teachers were not aware of designing effective progress monitoring checklists and related procedures.

**Constructive Feedback as Part of the Learning Process** – In this presentation, two graduate projects on constructive feedback are presented. The first project aimed to investigate the effects of teacher feedback on EFL students' writing skills. The research was conducted in one of the United Arab Emirates government primary boys' school. The study indicated slight improvements in students writing skills. Further, it highlighted the benefits of using feedback strategy in developing EFL students writing skills. The second study addressed using feedback to improve speaking skills in a private English medium school in Ras al Khaimah. The research was carried out with three students in Grade 6 and yielded similar results to the first study.

**Student and Teacher Perceptions of Criteria for Evaluation of Physics Projects** – Evaluation criteria for the scientific physics project are perceived differently among teachers and students. This study is based on interviews that were carried out among 28 physics teachers and 55 students. Results indicate that the students have a negative perception towards the evaluation criteria being used; they prefer a criterion that is comprehensive and clear. The physics teachers explain what officials in the Ministry can do to improve the criteria.

**Noora Abdulla Al Belooshi, Asma Abdulla Al Belooshi, Reeham Mohamed Hamdy, & Maha Saleh Al Mulla** are all master's students at the American Univeristy of Ras Al Khaimah.

## POSTER SESSIONS

### **A Conflict of Desires: English as a Global Language and Its Effect on Culture and Identity in the UAE**

*Sarah Hopkyns*

The United Arab Emirates' long and complicated history with English-speaking nations, its unique culture and native language, its current extremely high expatriate community, its youthfulness, and the fact that it is a region undergoing rapid change all make the issue of cultural identity particularly relevant in this part of the world. This is especially true given the dramatic spread of English in the sphere of education and everyday life in recent years. As a result, a distinct conflict of desires often exists among Emirati learners. On the one hand there is a desire for self-development and progress for which learning English is key. As Pennycook (2001, 81) states, 'English has become one of the most powerful means of inclusion into or exclusion from further education, employment, or social positions'. On the other hand, this conflicts with a strong feeling of loyalty to Arabian traditions and language leading to a marked resistance to the cultural aspects

of learning English. Mehran (2003, cited in Wiseman, 2006, 290) explains this phenomenon well by stating that, the desire is present to enter 'the global (i.e. Western) social, political, and economic fold, but there is a fundamental objection to much of the social, political, and economic ideologies that accompany such modernization.' How this reality affects identity in the UAE is certainly worthy of further investigation for future policy making. In this poster presentation the pivotal themes of English as a Global language and Arabian culture and identity will be explored before highlighting five main research questions centered around the above issues. The methodology of the research project will be explained along with the context and participants. The presentation will end with a description of how the data will be analyzed and a projected timeline for the study.

**Sarah Hopkyns** is an English Language Instructor at Zayed University, Abu Dhabi.

## An Account of TVET Educational Policies in the UAE

*Senabil Al-Hussaini & Jessie-Lea Howells Spenceley*

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is experiencing major changes worldwide. This is largely due to advancements in technology changing the workplace. Internationally, education is the subject of social, political and economic reforms, these are indicative of the period which has informed them, e.g. the industrial and information age, and globalization and supra globalization.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is no exception to these changes, whether it be the impact that nalyzing ion has had on education (Macpherson, Kachelhofer & El Nemr, 2007), or the changes that are happening to TVET at the secondary school level. The history of TVET schools in the UAE goes back to 1958, where the first vocational school was established in Sharjah, followed by two other schools in Dubai and Ras Al Khaima in 1964 and 1969, respectively (TRA, 2013). This qualitative historical research aimed at nalyzing the educational policies that have governed TVET in the UAE since its inception in 1958 to date, and has focused on answering two questions:

1. What were the major stages in the policy-making process, and,
2. how have these policies influenced the change in nature of TVET in the UAE.

Through a document analysis approach (Glesne, 2011), historical documents, government archives and legislations, and other artifacts were reviewed to understand the contextual, history of TVET related educational policies, the policy cycle (Parsons, 1995; Howlett, et. Al., 2009), and the major changes of the TVET system in the UAE. This research is still in progress; initial results show that there has been a major shift in TVET models implemented in the UAE. Various polices have contributed to these changes throughout the past 50 years. Understanding the policy making process and the policy dynamic can help shape TVET educational policies in the UAE and the wider GCC region.

**Senabil Al-Hussaini** is a Doctor of Education Student at the British University in Dubai.

**Jessie-Lea Howells Spenceley** is an English Specialist for L1 and L2 in Secondary School contexts.



The Gulf Comparative Education Society

## About the Gulf Comparative Education Society

Founded in 2008, the Gulf Comparative Education Society (GCES) was formed to enable academic, professional and educational discourse, from a comparative stance, with a focus on the Arabian Gulf region.

The GCES aims to:

- contribute to the development and improvement of teaching standards at all levels in the region;
- increase the dissemination of knowledge about international research and best practices practice from a comparative stance; and,
- promote action research and cross collaborations across the Gulf.

*The GCES is a non-profit society and a member of the World Congress of Comparative Education Societies. <http://gulfcoped.ning.com>.*



SHEIKH SAUD BIN SAQR AL QASIMI  
FOUNDATION FOR POLICY RESEARCH

## About the Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research

The Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research was established in 2009 to aid in the social, cultural, and economic development of Ras Al Khaimah (RAK), a northern emirate in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Established through Emiri decree, the Foundation is considered a non-profit, quasi-governmental organization and is the visionary initiative of Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi, UAE Supreme Council Member and Ruler of RAK. His Highness places great value on education and research, and the Al Qasimi Foundation was created to generate a world-class body of research on RAK and the broader UAE, develop local capacity in the public sector, and engage the community in its work.

*Log on to [www.alqasimifoundation.com](http://www.alqasimifoundation.com) to learn more about our research, grants, and programmatic activities.*

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## About Dubai Women's College

Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT), Dubai Women's College (DWC) recently celebrated its 20th anniversary in the company of students, faculty, staff, partners, alumnae, and friends. Founded in 1989, DWC began its legacy with only 145 students taking classes in a converted Dubai car showroom. The first batch of brave young ladies lead the way for women in the UAE not only by getting an education, but by making pioneering steps to join the predominantly male workforce after graduating. Today, 22 years later, DWC has a state of the art campus spread over 350,000m2 of cultivated land, with 2,200 students enrolled, and offering Bachelors degrees in five academic programs:

*Log on to [www.dwc.hct.ac.ae](http://www.dwc.hct.ac.ae) learn more about our programs, admissions, research, and support centers.*



Middlesex  
University  
Dubai

## About Middlesex University Dubai

Middlesex University Dubai is the first overseas campus of the internationally renowned Middlesex University in London. The campus which opened in January 2005, has over 2,800 students from over 90 nationalities and offers 31 undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in a wide variety of subject areas. The origins of Middlesex University date back to 1878 and it is one of only a handful UK universities to have been awarded three Queen's anniversary prizes. In 2007, Middlesex was ranked second in London for Teaching and Learning (HEFCE) and the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) rated research at Middlesex as 'Top 10 among new UK universities'.

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