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Gordon College of Education
73 Tchernichovsky St. Haifa, Israel. Tel. 04-8590111 Fax 04-8332040

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Table of contents

From School’s world

Inbar Levkovich & Michal Dolev-Cohen - Teachers witness students bullying their colleagues physically and online .......... 17

Aviva Avidan and Galit Sabov - The characteristics and meanings of the perception of organizational commitment among teachers in elementary schools ........................................ 46

Saied Bishara - Association between phonological and morphological awareness and reading comprehension among special-education learners in Arab elementary schools ....... 79

Shoshi Dorfberger & Meital Gertes - Implementation of a project-based learning program at a state elementary school to enhance English vocabulary acquisition ............................. 107

Shosh Davidson - Harnessed pedagogy: Promotional care and the conservative shadow in a corporate educational program ...... 124

From Emotional’s world

Eliezer Yariv & Maya Goldberg - ‘Emotional hijacking’ in the classroom: Teachers’ aggressive responses during stressful situations ................................................................. 144
Leehu Zysberg & Rotem Hemel - The role of Emotional Intelligence in Physical Activity levels and patterns .......... 169

Inbar Levkovich & Tsameret Ricon - Compassion Fatigue among Schoolteachers ......................................................... 181

From Teacher Education's world

Daniella Schönker - A regulatory perspective on teacher education .................................................................................. 202

Yocheved Yorkovsky & Ilana Levenberg - Choosing Science and Mathematics Disciplines in an Educational College - Characteristics and Motives ................................................................. 232

Anat Gilat & Aliza Aharoni - “War and Peace with Myself“ - The perspectives of graduate students in inclusive education on motherhood and teaching of children with special needs .... 254
Teachers witness students bullying their colleagues physically and online

Inbar Levkovich & Michal Dolev-Cohen

Abstract

Many teachers experience personally various forms of student bullying in both physical and online space. Some teachers observe the bullying of their colleagues from the sidelines. Witnessing other teachers being bullied has been linked to emotional distress that can also have negative implications on teachers’ educational work. The objective of the current study was to examine the prevalence of teachers who witness their colleagues being bullied by students in physical and virtual space and to determine the extent to which they report these incidents. The study comprised 288 teachers who completed demographic questionnaires and questionnaires about their experiences observing bullying both online and offline. The findings reveal that 93% of the teachers reported witnessing their colleagues being bullied in the physical space and 85% reported witnessing cyberbullying. Only a third to a half of these cases were reported to the authorities even though such incidents affect the personal wellbeing and sense of safety at school.
The characteristics and significance of the perception of elementary school teachers of organizational commitment

Aviva Avidan & Galit Sabov

Abstract

This research examines the concept of “organizational commitment” among the educational staff in several elementary schools from the perspective of the staff. We examined the different perceptions and meanings that teachers attach to this concept in their personal and professional lives. The participants comprise 15 female teachers across several elementary schools in the Haifa region. We used qualitative research methods and semi-constructed interviews. The findings of the research suggest that the characteristics affecting the teachers’ organizational commitment are initially embedded in personal values such as motivation (an ‘inner drive’ as some of the subjects referred to) and a sense of calling. Personal relationships between principals and colleagues also had a significant effect on the teachers’ level of commitment to their organization. There are two main conclusions. First, cooperation among teachers increases their level of commitment towards each other and towards the school as an organization. Second, positive relations between the school management and the teachers increase and considerably strengthen teachers’ commitment towards their school.
Association between phonological and morphological awareness and reading comprehension among special education learners in Arab elementary schools

Saied Bishara

Abstract

This study examined the link between phonological and morphological awareness and reading comprehension among children who attend self-contained special education classes in regular Arab elementary schools. Forty special education third and fourth grade students from regular Arab elementary schools in Israel participated in this study. Phonological awareness was tested using two tasks: phoneme segmentation of real words and of non-words. Morphological awareness was tested using two tasks: morphological production and morphological judgment. The reading comprehension instrument contained open-ended and multiple-choice questions and was used to test reading comprehension at the word, the sentence, and the text level. The study’s first hypothesis proposed that the higher the level of phonological awareness in Arabic among special education learners, the better their reading comprehension. The second hypothesis proposed that the higher the level of morphological awareness in Arabic among special education learners, the better their reading comprehension level. The third hypothesis proposed that, in the context of reading comprehension, an interaction would be found between phonological and morphological awareness. This study’s findings confirmed all three hypotheses. These findings may help in the search for methodologies for promoting literacy and reading comprehension in special education learners. They may also contribute to the development of teacher training programs that focus on effective methods for raising phonological and morphological awareness, ultimately resulting in improved reading comprehension in special education learners. This
study’s findings and conclusions have implications for a broad range of phenomena in pedagogy and may, for example, contribute to reducing dropout rates and improving student achievement and self-efficacy.
Implementation of a project-based learning program at an elementary school to enhance English vocabulary acquisition

Shoshi Dorfberger & Meital Gertes

Abstract

Project-based learning is a pedagogical tool implemented as part of the “Meaningful Learning” national program initiated by the Israeli Ministry of Education in the summer of 2014. The current study aims to assess whether the implementation of a project-based learning program using 21st-century skills helped to enhance fifth graders’ English vocabulary. English is a core subject in Israel from the fourth grade. Vocabulary acquisition is a necessary basic step in the pre-foundation and foundation stages of learning English as a foreign language. Implementation of an English project-based learning program in elementary school is designed to enhance the vocabulary acquisition on topics that are a part of the curriculum. The present study was conducted over a period of two years. It comprised 25 gifted students from the beginning of fourth grade to the end of fifth grade. During this period, each student completed four projects spending about eight weeks on each one. The projects were assigned at different periods during the same two years. Projects were evaluated based on a rubric that checked skills, knowledge, habits, and products. The findings indicate significant differences in student achievement on the various projects and a significant effect of the project on categories of skills, habits, and products. The conclusion of the study is that project-based learning in vocabulary acquisition in English as a foreign language contributes to enhancing vocabulary knowledge and encourages the use of high-order thinking, self-learning, and reflective thinking.
Harnessed pedagogy: Promotional care and the conservative shadow in a corporate educational program

Shosh Davidson

Abstract

Since the 1990s, there has been a dramatic rise in the commercialization of education. This paper examines the commercialization of schools in Israel, using an ethnographic study of a philanthropic educational program called ‘Hakhamim Baribua’, ‘Super smart—a responsible consumerism program’. The fieldwork included an ethnographic study of the program, which was developed and directed by the public relations department of a large retail corporation. The program is designed as a competitive participatory framework. It relies on a constructivist approach closely tied to the program’s competitive ethos. The schools adopt non-contentious activities, and implement them in accordance with a conservative educational philosophy. The program makes ample use of staged events and ceremonies celebrating the connection between the school and the corporation. Each such ceremony focuses on the mutual acknowledgement of the staff at the school and at the corporation sponsoring the program. The mutually self-congratulatory speeches serve to bolster existing values. Consequently, the commercial pedagogy casts a conservative shadow over educational knowledge and practice. Schools, which are required to deal with a highly competitive reality, adopted a project that promoted constructivist learning environments for a competitive participation framework. In this way, the commercial pedagogy promotes market ideology and perpetuates the reality of polarized social relations.
‘Emotional hijacking’ in the classroom: Teachers’ aggressive responses during stressful situations

Eliezer Yariv & Maya Goldberg

Abstract

Teachers work in a stressful environment that force them, at times, to cope with pupils’ misbehavior and demands of parents. Despite their extensive preparation and experience, and strict norms and regulations, some teachers lose their temper when faced with a pupil’s provocative behavior. The majority of the 64 teachers we interviewed manage to remain calm and to restrain themselves during such chaotic situations in the classroom, but five teachers responded violently. A content analysis of these unexpected findings demonstrates a similarity to the characteristics of ‘emotional hijacking’ syndrome (Goleman, 1997): (a) All of the teachers perceived the situation as an extreme threat to their professional authority and wellbeing; (b) They immediately lost control and their aggressive responses were disproportionate; (c) Intense internal physiological responses accompanied normal emotions of rage and anger; (d) By the end of the conflict, the teachers realized how inappropriate their responses had been and felt remorse. The analysis clarifies how such chaotic, dynamic stressful situation and the provocative conduct of parents or pupils contributed to the teacher’s intense emotional outburst. The discussion deals with the meaning of these occurrences and looks at measures to minimize their frequency and reduce the impact on all who are involved.
The role of emotional intelligence in physical activity levels and patterns

Leehu Zysberg & Rotem Hemel

Abstract

This manuscript summarizes research on the connection between emotional Intelligence (EI) and the levels of physical activity (PA) in a sample of 110 healthy young adults in Israel. The sample was selected by the snowball method. Participants were given questionnaires to determine measures of EI, PA and background demographics. A path analysis supported a positive association of .20-.28 effect size between the two measures even when controlling for background variables. The results raise the possibility may emotional intelligence plays a role in PA levels and patterns. Potential underlying mechanisms as well as directions for future research are discussed.
Compassion fatigue among teachers

Inbar Levkovich & Tsameret Ricon

Abstract
Compassion fatigue is described as indirect trauma and as secondary damage resulting from the involvement of teachers in the stress of their students. The transfer of the traumatic stress from the student is likely to take a toll on the teacher’s personal and professional life. There is evidence that compassion fatigue has an impact on the individual’s life, but few studies have been conducted among teachers. The present study examined the three components of compassion fatigue: burnout, secondary traumatization, and compassion satisfaction among Israeli teachers. In order to assess the effects of demographic and professional factors compassion fatigue we distributed a demographic information questionnaire and a compassion fatigue questionnaire to 103 participants. The findings show that 50% of the teachers report compassion fatigue, 40% report burnout, 24% report secondary traumatization, and 57% report compassion satisfaction. Older teachers reported higher levels of compassion fatigue than younger teachers did, and seniority in teaching mediated the link between age and compassion fatigue. The results of the study indicate that the experience of helping the student with trauma may affect teacher’s personal life, especially in older teachers who have worked in the profession for longer. We discuss the practical implications of the findings at the organizational and individual levels that could help reduce the scope of the phenomenon and improve the psychological wellbeing of teachers.
A regulatory perspective on teacher education

Daniella Schönker

Abstract

The study focuses on teacher education policy and examines whether governmental regulations allow a creeping trend of privatization in teacher education programs. It also explores the role of governmental regulation in shaping new trends in teacher education programs. The study is based on five main sources of data: legislation and regulations, policy documents, protocols of the Education, the Culture and Sports Committee, the Council for Higher Education website and the Ministry of Education website. The study combines descriptive research with statistical correlational analysis. The study examines regulatory changes in teacher education policy and maps new trends in teacher education programs. The research findings reveal that: (1) There are privatization trends in teacher education programs; (2) Privatization in teacher education is carried out by organizational interconnections; (3) There is evidence of privatization trends in teacher education programs coexisting with regulatory centralization in teacher education policy; (4) There is territorial inequality in teacher education programs. The article discusses the implications of these findings.
Choosing science and mathematics disciplines in colleges of education - characteristics and motives

Yocheved Yorkovsky & Ilana Levenberg

Abstract

In the colleges of education using the ‘Ariav outline’ suggested by the Council for Higher Education in Israel students are required to choose two disciplines for their studies. Usually, one of the disciplines is their preference. The aim of this study was to find out their motives for selecting the science and mathematics. One hundred and fifty one students completed a questionnaire designed to reveal the reasons for selecting their first and second choices. The findings indicate that most of the students had not studied science and mathematics extensively in high school. The students believe the important skills for teaching are mainly knowledge of the discipline and personal characteristics. A positive experience learning science or mathematics in the past influenced their choice. The conclusion is that interesting and experiential curricula must be designed for science and mathematics in schools. In addition, science and mathematics studies in colleges of education should be expanded to provide appropriate training for the future teachers.
“War and Peace with Myself “- The perspectives of graduate students in inclusive education on motherhood and teaching children with special needs

Anat Gilat & Aliza Aharoni

Abstract

The focus of the study is the perspective of MA students studying inclusive education of special needs children in the educational system. The research question asked students to formulate their own ideas on the inclusion of their own children and their students. Ten mothers participated in the study, all of whom were teachers in schools or kindergartens with special education. In the past, all of them included their own children (both male and female) with special needs, in the educational system, and a few of them included more than one child of their own. The research method was qualitative-phenomenological. Additionally, practices of collecting and analyzing data developed through the influence of the philosophy and principles of narrative treatment were used. Two points of view came together in the course of their MA studies. The first was described by the words “war with myself”, that reflect the two early themes: motherhood and inclusion – teaching and inclusion. The second, described by the words “peace with myself”, reflect the third theme found: motherhood, teaching and inclusion as personal and professional empowerment. We found that in addition to knowledge and tools for examining themselves, their motherhood and their professionalism, and a high level of sensitivity, concern and consideration, participants experienced personal and professional empowerment.