

**1A Sub-theme: Education futures**

Title: Navigating the Local and Global Values in Civic Education: An Analysis of Secondary School Civics Textbooks in Tanzania

Presenter: Mr MWAIHOLA, Moyo Osiah (The Education University of Hong Kong)

**Abstract:**

As the world is increasingly becoming global, countries are faced with developing citizens who possess the 'global' ethos, values, and competencies that will enable them to integrate into the global community. However, not all global values resonate well with the local values, often leading to tensions. In Tanzania, there has always been tension between the local and global, with the latter usually discursively constructed or perceived as colonial or alien, especially Western, and hence a threat to local people and their values. Despite these global-local tensions in the public and political domain, no research has explored how local and global values are represented in civic education in Tanzania. Civic education textbooks can offer a critical lens for understanding how Tanzania navigates global and local values in civic education, as they are a crucial venue for mirroring the specific ideologies, values, and competencies needed to develop citizens. Based on Ubuntu values and liberal and neoliberal citizenship values framework, we employ content analysis technique to analyze four Tanzanian secondary school Civics textbooks to navigate and capture the representation of local and global values in civic education in Tanzania. Initial findings reveal that civic education textbooks are influenced more by global values and less by local values. We argue that while global values are important for citizens' effective integration into the global community, local values remain important in the lives of local people and communities in specific local contexts. We advocate for more appreciation and inclusion of local values in textbooks to allow for diversity and multiplicity of perspectives and identities, and we highlight how Ubuntu values could offer this possibility.

Keywords: Civic education, Globalisation, Textbook, Tanzania, Ubuntu

**1B Sub-theme: Education futures**

Title: An Inquiry into the Impact of Online Education on University Student Engagement in Hong Kong

Presenter: Ms FAN Kehan (The Education University of Hong Kong)

**Abstract:**

**Background & Problem Statement:** Since the 2019 COVID-19 pandemic, online education has grown rapidly, reshaping global higher education. However, student engagement in online courses is lower than in traditional face-to-face settings. This research examines low engagement in online learning at public universities in Hong Kong. The challenge lies in identifying key factors behind this decline, as prior studies have noted engagement issues but not reached consensus on their causes or solutions.

**Purpose of the Study:** This study aims to analyze the factors affecting student engagement in online education, focusing on public universities in Hong Kong. It seeks to bridge the gap between theory and practice by identifying key drivers and barriers to engagement, providing actionable insights for improving online learning and informing policy decisions.

**Method of the Study:** This study employs a qualitative mixed-method design, combining a literature review with empirical data collection via questionnaires. The literature review analyzes key works on interactive engagement strategies in online education since the post-COVID-19 era. Empirical data were gathered from a selected group of Hong Kong university students who completed a questionnaire about their experiences and perceptions of online courses. The survey includes demographic and closed-ended questions to better understand student engagement dynamics.

**Key Findings:** Preliminary results highlight the importance of interactivity in boosting student engagement in online learning. Quizzes, discussions, and collaborative activities are key factors that enhance motivation and involvement. The study confirms Moore's classification of interaction types—learner-learner, learner-instructor, and learner-content—as essential components for fostering engagement. Insights from Social Learning Theory also provide cognitive and behavioral strategies to improve student participation and learning outcomes.

**Significance:** This research emphasizes integrating interactive elements in online education to boost student engagement. It offers educators practical strategies for designing engaging courses and informs policymakers about enhancing virtual learning environments. As online education evolves, this study deepens our understanding of engagement dynamics and supports future improvements in teaching methodologies.



## **1C    *Sub-theme: Education futures***

Title: Uncertain futures and the rethinking of Global Citizenship Education

Presenter: Dr Stephen CHATELIER (The University of Melbourne)

### **Abstract:**

It has now become commonplace to accept that the world should adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the education specific goal of SDG4. Beyond the Agenda's influence on policy thinking, the SDGs are now often included within schools' and universities' curricula related to Global Citizenship Education (GCE). Commonly, GCE presents the SDGs as an important mechanism for achieving greater inclusion and equity, or a more prosperous and equal world. Rather than interrogating the logics and aims of the SDGs, or indeed the broader global infrastructure in which they are situated, this approach to GCE places the SDGs as both the assumed foundation for, and telos of, a better future world.

In this paper, I make the argument that such an approach to teaching global citizenship is more akin to training or formation than it is to education. In other words, it is aimed at the developing of global citizens. While such an orientation has its place, I argue here for an approach to teaching global citizenship that is more firmly aimed at providing an education in global citizenship. The argument is based on the premise that education should educate, and that education is more than training or formation; it involves inquiry into the histories, politics, and undetermined futures of discourses. This means that students should be able to examine both the normative and empirical dimensions of global citizenship – and globalization – as part of the process in determining their own views and commitments. In contrast to a training or formation orientation, the education approach does not aim for a certain outcome and impact of GCE. While perhaps a more risky approach, I argue that prioritising the 'E' in 'GCE' is not only faithful to the task of education, but also enables a robustness to students' position-taking.

## **1E    *Sub-theme: Education futures***

Title: Leading Education Reform with Academic Expertise? A Network Ethnography of the Role of Esteemed Scholars in Shaping Social and Emotional Learning Worldwide

Presenters: Dr Jin JIN & Ms Chenwei PENG (East China Normal University)

### **Abstract:**

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) first emerged in the United States in the 1980s and has become a globally popular form of education 'best practice' worldwide. Studies demonstrate the role of esteemed scholars in psychology, economics, education, and neuroscience in shaping the policy legitimacy and attractiveness of SEL in the United States and beyond (e.g., Williamson, 2019).

Our study, using the method of network ethnography (Ball et al., 2017), depicted and critically engaged with a policy network shaping the rise and development of SEL in the United States and beyond. We focused on the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) in the United States, which produced the most widely used conceptual and practical SEL frameworks, handbooks, and reference resources worldwide (Shen & Wang, 2019). Based on the intensive online searches focusing on CASEL and its founders and collaborators, we presented and analysed the policy network comprising esteemed scholars, education practitioners, philanthropists, news reporters, and politicians, as well as their work and influences in the United States, United Kingdom, and major international organisations.

Our findings highlight 'applied policy' (Auld & Morris, 2016) as the dominant policy discourse shaping the global dissemination and popularity of SEL and its being taken up as the new direction of education reform and innovation. Correspondingly, esteemed scholars tend to draw on marketised and mediatized habitus rather than academic dispositions and sensibilities if they want to influence the policy dialogue in SEL. Our findings problematise the acclaimed academic foundations of SEL and raise questions on the role of scholars in shaping education reforms and practice.



**1F    *Sub-theme: Education futures***

Title: Reimagining Teaching and Learning in Higher Education for Sustainability  
Competencies: An Integrated Approach for Public Universities in Hong Kong

Presenter: Dr XIONG Weiyan (The Education University of Hong Kong)

**Abstract:**

Higher education institutions are increasingly recognized as vital platforms for advancing the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In Hong Kong, eight public universities have made notable efforts in embedding sustainability into their institutional strategies. However, these initiatives predominantly target environmental management, with a pressing need to incorporate sustainability into both formal and informal educational contexts. This study employs a desk-research methodology to assess and compare the progress made by these universities in integrating sustainability into teaching and learning. The findings indicate that while these institutions enjoy a significant level of autonomy and adopt a grassroots approach to sustainability, they face a major challenge due to the absence of institutional guidelines for embedding sustainability competencies within educational practices. Furthermore, the growing emphasis on sustainability-related rankings has led to a pragmatic focus that risks resulting in superficial undertakings. To address these challenges, this chapter suggests a practice-oriented holistic framework as a pragmatic guide for the eight universities, aimed at effectively integrating sustainability into their teaching and learning processes and fostering sustainability competencies among both students and faculty.

## **1G    *Sub-theme: Education futures***

Title: Transforming Teacher Preparation: Insights from the Internship Experience at an Alternative School

Presenters: Dr LEUNG Wing Tat & Ms LEE Cho Ying (The Education University of Hong Kong)

### **Abstract:**

The Department of Education Policy and Leadership at the Education University of Hong Kong offers pre-service teachers a unique learning opportunity through the "Exploring Alternative Education: Internship Experience in Alternative School" course. This programme places undergraduate students as assistant teachers at RTC Gaia School, a representative alternative school in Hong Kong that embodies nature-affective, people-oriented, and autonomous learning principles, promoting sustainable development values.

This research explores how alternative education experiences impact participants' views on educational philosophies and pedagogical approaches amid evolving technological and economic changes. As traditional pedagogies struggle to meet diverse learning needs, exploring alternative educational models becomes increasingly vital.

Data will be collected through in-depth interviews and reflective journals from 5 out of the total 9 participants, allowing an exploration of their evolving perspectives on education. This study aims to uncover how engagement with an alternative school's practices informs pre-service teachers' professional identities and approaches to teaching.

By analyzing participants' integration of these experiences into their pedagogical frameworks, the research seeks to highlight the potential of alternative education to foster critical thinking and adaptability in future educators. The findings will provide insights for teacher preparation programmes, emphasizing the importance of equity and inclusivity in education.

Ultimately, this research contributes to broader discussions about the future of education, advocating for a teaching workforce equipped to navigate the complexities of an AI-influenced economy while meeting the diverse needs of learners. Through this lens, the study underscores the necessity of diversifying educational experiences to challenge traditional notions of schooling and enhance the effectiveness of teacher preparation.



## **11 Sub-theme: Higher education internationalization and student mobility**

Title: Internationalization of academic staff in the Mainland China: the issue of institutional collaborations

Presenter: Dr Giulio MARINI (The University of Catania, Italy)

### **Abstract:**

The contribution of internationality in pursuing research is known. We look at collaborations between internationals (foreign passport-holders), returnees (people affiliated in their own country, but with experience abroad, such as having got a PhD abroad), and “locals” (academics who never have been affiliated abroad) within institutions as a focal interplay in treasuring internationality. Operationally, we investigate quality of publications out of different combinations of institutional collaborations in research-intensive Chinese Mainland universities via observable co-authorships. We predict which combination of collaborations generate more likely success – citations over Scopus or target journals (“Q1”). We check by a variety of covariates derived from funding and extra-institutional co-authorships. Findings reveal that despite internationals are scarcely involved in co-authoring with local peers, those circumstances reveal good degrees of success. Recommendation at institutional level is primarily that of involving more closely the still small share of internationals along with returnees with colleagues. However, it is also found that not all combinations yield advantages, building up evidence about institutional efficiency.

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**1K Sub-theme: Higher education internationalization and student mobility**

Title: "What experiences in the short-term study abroad tour have developed my cultural understanding"? Narratives of undergraduate students in Hong Kong

Presenter: Dr CHENG Tak Lai (The Education University of Hong Kong)

**Abstract:**

This presentation reports the initial findings of a study of the learning experiences of undergraduate students on a short-term study abroad tour at a university in Hong Kong. Short-term study abroad has become increasingly popular in higher education as a means of developing undergraduate students' global citizenship. Recent research has shown that this effective pedagogical practice can contribute to students' development of intercultural competence and maturity, which are essential in today's globalized world and future diverse workforces. While the benefits of student development in the context of higher education have been highlighted, the extent to which their learning has been realized during the tour is still questionable. Indeed, researchers are called upon to expand the discussion by engaging in multidisciplinary and applied empirical research. In this regard, this presentation aims to fill this gap by capturing the abroad experiences of undergraduate students from a Mongolia study tour organized in the summer of 2024 at a Hong Kong university. Empirical data from 11 participant-led photo elicitation interviews were collected to provide evidence of what the tour experience developed Hong Kong undergraduate students' understanding of Mongolian culture. The participants' narratives were analyzed and will be presented in the findings section. At the end of the presentation, wider implications will also be addressed, in particular how the short-term study abroad tour can contribute to students' cultural understanding of another country in practice.

## **1L    *Sub-theme: Higher education internationalization and student mobility***

Title: An exploratory study of ASEAN students' engagement dynamics with local communities in China, Japan, and South Korea

Presenters: Dr Yingxin LIU, Xin LI & Lilan CHEN (The Chinese University of Hong Kong Shenzhen)

### **Abstract:**

Over the past decade, significant geopolitical and economic transformations in East Asia have profoundly altered the patterns of intra-regional mobility among tertiary students. Notably, ASEAN students have increasingly pursued higher education in China, Japan, and South Korea (hereafter referred to as "Korea") as preferred destinations, reflecting shifting regional academic mobility patterns. Rising ASEAN student enrollment is reshaping the internationalization patterns in the three countries, diverging from previous student mobility paradigms within this culturally aligned Northeast Asian triad. This change affects not only the universities themselves but also the local societies that host these universities. However, there is limited understanding of how international students engage with local communities, highlighting a gap in current research. This study addresses the existing research gap by exploring the engagement dynamics between the increasing ASEAN student population and the local societies in China, Japan, and Korea. This study aims to (1) explore how ASEAN students engage with the local societies and (2) compare these interactions across the three host nations. This study adopted qualitative interviews, with twenty-seven participants, including full-time ASEAN students, university staff in international affairs, and representatives from local governments and NGOs across the three countries. A thematic analysis was conducted, given the explorative and interpretative purpose of this study. The findings identified varying degrees of engagement among ASEAN students with local societies of the three countries across economic, socio-cultural, and diplomatic-political dimensions. This cross-national variance is potentially attributable to divergent governmental strategies and university motivations for recruiting ASEAN students.



**1M Sub-theme: Higher education internationalization and student mobility**

Title: Rejuvenating Chinese civilization along the Silk Road? PhD Journeys of international 'peripheral' students in Humanities and Social Science field in China

Presenters:

Dr Kenichi DOI (International House of Japan) and

Dr Kun DAI (The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

Abstract:

Chinese universities face tensions between the global and the local academic contexts as they strive to absorb Western knowledge and modernise their academic systems. In particular, most previous research points out that research in China's humanities and social sciences (HSS) has significantly lagged behind its remarkable progress in the natural science and engineering. However, international education has expanded under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), including in the HSS fields. Through programmes such as the Confucius China Study Program, the Chinese government and universities have offered generous public scholarships to PhD students from their geographically 'peripheral' partner countries under the BRI. These students are now engaging with China's local HSS discourses, often grounded in Confucian, Marxist, or state-defined frameworks. Drawing on the lens of world system analysis, this study explores China's gradual shift to a regional 'core' in the HSS—an area that conventional wisdom has often overlooked—through its doctoral education of international students from BRI countries. Specifically, based on in-depth interviews with ten doctoral student, three supervisors, and two relevant policy officials, the research examines how China's international doctoral education in HSS is evolving as international students navigate the epistemic, institutional, and cultural complexities of undertaking doctoral study in China. The findings reveal both the potential and limits of China's evolving role as a knowledge hub for its 'peripheral' countries, with its emerging international influence and rich historical and cultural legacies. This study contributes to a nuanced understanding of China's international HSS education and research by offering insights into China's changing positionality, and it presents practical implications for universities and policy actors seeking to cultivate international talent from BRI partners within China's nationalised frameworks.

First Parallel Session (10:45–11:45)

## **1N Sub-theme: Higher education internationalization and student mobility**

Title: Reframing international mobility as student agency situated within knowledge structures

Presenter: Dr Soyoung LEE (Seoul National University, South Korea)

Abstract:

Purpose/Objectives:

This paper investigates how international student mobility functions as a deliberate act of student agency aimed at academic self-formation. Rather than viewing mobility as a background context or economic investment, this study reconceptualises it as a transformative engagement with knowledge structures—contributing to a more educationally grounded understanding of internationalisation in higher education aligned with SDG 4.

Theoretical Framework:

Grounded in realist social theory, Vygotskian views of human learning, and boundary-crossing theory, this study frames cross-border mobility as student agency enacted through and within disciplinary knowledge structures.

Methods/Modes of Inquiry:

Using multi-sited ethnography, the study followed 13 South Korean postgraduate students—six studying in the UK and seven in Korea—over a 15-month period. Data were generated through class observations, interviews, photo-elicitation, and reflexive fieldnotes.

Data Sources/Evidence:

A mixed-mode analysis was conducted across over 150 hours of interviews and observational data. Comparative coding between the UK and Korea cohorts highlighted how mobility reshaped students' disciplinary environments, epistemic agency, and academic engagement.

Findings and Implications:

Findings reveal that mobility allows students to (1) reposition themselves within global hierarchies of knowledge, (2) transform their relationship with academic knowledge through shifting epistemic cultures, and (3) engage reflexively with both local and global content in their disciplines. The study introduces the concept of 'academic self-formation', where disciplinary knowledge becomes a boundary-crossing artefact that enables students' transformation. These insights offer a powerful rethinking of international education policy and practice by centering students' epistemic agency as central to equity and quality education (SDG 4).