



Convergent Paths
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
ANNUAL POST GRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2014

Friday 17 October 2014 (9.15 am - 3.30pm)
MacRobert Building Room 028

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09.15–09.30	<i>Registration</i>	
09.30–10.00	Joint Keynote Address: Professor Gabrielle Ivinson - Research Capacity Building, Education, Professor Pete Stollery - Director, Music, Dr Thomas A. McKean - Director, Elphinstone Institute	
Session One	Chair: Ronnie Gibson	
10.00–10.20	Karolina Gombert, 'Food Ways and Futures'	3
10.20–10.40	Nicolas Le Bigre, 'Considering "Home": Immigrant Voices from North-East Scotland	4
10.40–11.00	Nyaga Esther Catherine, 'The Role of Head Teachers in the Facilitation of Teacher Professionalism and Effectiveness'	5
11.00–11.20	Maxwell Kwesi Nyatsikor, 'Connecting the Ghanaian Primary School Teacher Characteristics to Pupils' Academic Achievement: A Secondary Data Analysis'	6
11.20–11.30	<i>Refreshment Break</i>	
Session Two	Chair: Nicolas Le Bigre	
11.30–11.50	Sheila Mary Young, 'The Contemporary Blackening and How It Has Evolved'	7
11.50–12.10	Gemma McGregor, 'Music for Saint Magnus'	8
12.10–12.30	Assel Zhakim, 'Home Learning in the Early Years in Kazakhstan'	9
12.30–13.00	Maria Vilberg, Piano Recital	
13.00–13.30	<i>Lunch</i>	
Session Three	Chair: Maxwell Kwesi Nyatsikor	
13.30–13.50	Jane Kellock, 'Living a Mindful Life: Following Long-Term Practitioners of Mindfulness, Compassion, and Insight to the Edge of Reason and Beyond'	10
13.50–14.10	Ronnie Gibson, 'Nineteenth-Century Scottish Fiddle Competitions'	11
14.10–14.30	Prince Hamidu Armah, 'Investigating Ghanaian Primary Teacher's Beliefs Regarding Teacher Mathematical Problem Solving: An Elicitation Study Using Theory of Planned Behaviour'	12
14.30–14.50	Mishel Moriah, 'School Leadership and Inclusive Education in the Caribbean Secondary Schools	13
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15.00–15.30	Plenary, Pete Stollery	

NOTES



School Leadership and Inclusive Education in the Caribbean Secondary Schools

Mishel Moriah | Education

This presentation will consider issues of successful school leadership in the Caribbean territories. Although this issue is currently being debated up and down Caribbean territories (Miller, 2013), these discussions do not seem to occur within the context of inclusive education. However, research shows that many scholars support the view that school leadership is central to the success of inclusive education (Ruairc et al., 2013; Lambert et al., 2002; Leithwood & Riehl, 2013; Heller & Firestone, 1995). The English-speaking Caribbean largely support The Dakar Framework for Action in declaring Education for All and their openness to the UNESCO's Salamanca Statement for Action 1994 is no secret; there have even been reports indicating steady progression in educational leadership and inclusive practices within the last decade, however, no planned, long-term innovations have emerged, and reviews show that in many instances, provisions are short-term and sometimes ad hoc (Commonwealth, Secretariat Document, 1982, 2004, 2011). With the aim of understanding the experiences of Caribbean school leaders and how this impacts their roles of facilitating inclusive education in secondary schools, this research will be conducted with head teachers from across the Caribbean, using the University of the West Indies as a hub for meeting participants. To this end, a qualitative study will be conducted, using an interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA), which explores how people ascribe meaning to their own experiences. This type of analysis is set within the broader context of interpretative social science research, using mainly qualitative data and offers both a methodological and an analytical approach oriented towards exploring and understanding the experience of a particular phenomenon. Essentially, the findings should aid education officials and policy makers in formulating and implementing related policy which will aid educational development at local, national and regional levels within the Caribbean.

Welcome to the 2nd Annual School of Education Postgraduate Research Conference

The School of Education is home to a vibrant PGR community, researching a broad range of topics across Folklore, Ethnology, Ethnomusicology, Musicology, Music Composition, and Education.

This one-day conference will bring together the diverse array of SoE PGR students, and will afford the opportunity to share not only research, but also the experiences of the journey each is travelling.

In addition to paper sessions, the conference will include a keynote address delivered jointly by the Director of Music, the Director of the Elphinstone Institute, and the Professor of Education for Research Capacity Building. Further, there will be a musical recital by the 2014 winner of the Ogston Prize, Maria Vilberg.

 Session One

Food Ways And Futures

Karolina Gombert | Education

In Scotland, over thirteen thousand young people become homeless every year, food poverty is on the rise, and concerns about the influences of the recent welfare reform are being raised. Young people experiencing homelessness can face severe economic and other difficulties on an everyday basis. They can struggle to eat healthily, which has implications for their ongoing development. This project draws on and is shaped by a number of disciplines: health promotion; nutrition; education; and sociology. It is guided by underpinning values of egalitarianism, emancipation and empowerment. It is designed, first, to explore the food choices of homeless and vulnerable young people. The research aims to address (and challenge) policies targeted at reducing food-related health and socio-economic inequalities. Second, the project is designed to engage homeless young people in the co-construction of knowledge and the co-creation of action, through the use of participatory research methods. The presentation focuses on early findings and insights gained during the first exploratory phase of ethnographic fieldwork, as well as other insights gained through interviews and the photo voice method. There have been indications of a 'clash of cultures' in terms of different life worlds, values and lifestyles coming together. Furthermore, the research experience in the beginning of the first phase indicates that value-loaded investigations of food choices would be inappropriate. This gives reason to think about the relativity of 'wellbeing' and 'health', and how much choice one really has. This presentation reflects critically on the possibilities and limitations of the 'healthy expectations' of the researcher, the organisation, and policy-makers.

 Session Three

Investigating Ghanian Primary Teacher's Beliefs Regarding Teacher Mathematical Problem Solving: An Elicitation Study Using Theory of Planned Behaviour

Prince Hamidu Armah | Education

Teacher beliefs, mediated by intentions, have been noted as precursors to any shift from the traditional show and tell approach towards teaching mathematical problem solving. Yet, little research has addressed teachers' beliefs and intentions to teach mathematics problem solving in primary schools. Particularly, research about mathematics teachers' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control beliefs relative to teaching mathematics problem solving in primary schools remains sparse. This study begins a line of research investigating the behavioural intentions of primary teachers to teaching mathematical problem solving. The study reports on an elicitation study with a diverse sample of 50 primary teachers from the Effutu Municipality of the Central Region of Ghana. The participants responded to nine open-ended survey questions designed following Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour. In general, the study suggests that participating school teachers believe there are huge benefits to teaching Mathematical Problem Solving. However, language, class level, and limited resources of time, and teaching and learning materials, present substantial barriers to teaching mathematical problem solving in primary schools. Specific suggestions for addressing teachers' beliefs about teaching Mathematical Problem Solving are recommended.

 Session Three

Nineteenth-Century Scottish Fiddle Competitions

Ronnie Gibson | Elphinstone Institute/Music

The emergence of regular and instituted fiddle competitions in mid nineteenth-century Scotland arguably marks a new yet previously unrecognised period in the history of Scottish fiddle music. While there are records of competitions taking place earlier, they were redefined in the 1850s, reflecting ideas about national music and receiving many column inches in the popular press.

Furthermore, they established a nationally significant public platform for the performance of dance music away from the dance hall, thus elevating the status of the music from functional to aesthetic. This paper will give a brief history of fiddle competitions in Scotland, before going on to explore the motivations for holding them and their impact on the performance and understanding of fiddle music. Based primarily on accounts reported in nineteenth-century newspaper articles, it will argue that, contrary to the description of the mid-nineteenth century as waning years in the history of Scottish fiddle music, these very years witnessed its reinvention, the results of which are still felt today.

 Session One

Considering 'Home': Immigrant Voices from North-East Scotland

Nicolas Le Bigre | Elphinstone Institute

Immigrants, both recent and established, interpret and interact with the concept of 'home' in myriad ways. Indeed, the notion of 'home' is dynamic, and its meaning depends on time, geography, life experience, relationships, and current context, among other things. Basing my analysis on one-to-one interviews with immigrants in the North-East of Scotland, I will examine how contributors themselves view and shape concepts of 'home'. In listening to these narratives, it becomes clear that the idea of 'home' is multivalent. Different 'homes' co-exist and perform diverse and often symbiotic roles in everyday life. Some 'homes' may be place-rooted, such as birth-countries or ancestral homelands; for many immigrants 'homes' can be found in current geography; and for growing numbers of individuals who have lived in several different regions and countries, 'homes' may also include some of these 'in-between' locations. Further, when discussing the realities of work, family, and leisure, and the abstractions of memory and identity, 'home' might appear as layered memories, times, concepts, and even people. Most importantly, these narratives show that notions of 'home' do not exist in stasis but are ever-changing, depending on context and varying with an individual's needs and desires. By considering these notions of 'home', both in concept and in consciousness, the paper aims for an inclusive theoretical analysis of immigrant narrative that brings together the voices of fieldworker and contributor.



Session One

The Role of Head Teachers in the Facilitation of Teacher Professionalism and Effectiveness

Nyaga Esther Catherine | Education

Teachers have a substantive impact on student learning, and school leaders—head teachers, in this case—also fundamentally have an impact on teachers and their professionalism in terms of pedagogy, subject knowledge, professional values, and behaviour. However, an examination of research literature shows that there is little research on school leadership, and even less on school leadership effects on teachers and their professionalism in Kenya. The focal point of this qualitative-research-based presentation will therefore be to explore the role of head teachers in the facilitation of teacher professionalism and effectiveness. It will examine the current practice of school leadership in public primary schools in Kenya, and how it can be enhanced so as to facilitate teacher professionalism and effectiveness for improved student learning outcomes.



Session Three

Living A Mindful Life: Following Long-Term Practitioners of Mindfulness, Compassion, and Insight to the Edge of Reason and Beyond

Jane Kellock | Education

This study consists of a hermeneutic phenomenological examination of the long-term generalist experiences of students of Rob Nairn's Mindfulness-Based Living model. Nairn's model is a blend of Western psychology and Buddhism, with compassion and insight integrated with mindfulness in an approach that is arguably a more complete rendering of Buddhist psychology than secular approaches to mindfulness alone. The study takes the position that long-term mindfulness, compassion, and insight practices have a transformative impact that is not reflected in the current body of quantitative research. The study aims to point to the richness and depth of the experience of living a mindful life. A second research question of how to research mindfully reflects the synergies between the researcher's own practices of mindfulness, compassion, and insight, and the attitude and skills required of a phenomenological researcher. A review of the research literature and a philosophical examination has been carried out. Data is being gathered from seven participants over three largely unstructured interviews, with a fourth interview to reflect on narrative text. A critical hermeneutic analysis will be undertaken and essential themes explicated.

 Session Two

Home Learning in the Early Years in Kazakhstan

Assel Zhakim | Education

In Scotland, over thirteen thousand young people become homeless every year, food poverty is on the rise, and concerns about the influences of the recent welfare reform are being raised. Young people experiencing homelessness can face severe economic and other difficulties on an everyday basis. They can struggle to eat healthily, which has implications for their ongoing development. This project draws on and is shaped by a number of disciplines: health promotion; nutrition; education; and sociology. It is guided by underpinning values of egalitarianism, emancipation and empowerment. It is designed, first, to explore the food choices of homeless and vulnerable young people. The research aims to address (and challenge) policies targeted at reducing food-related health and socio-economic inequalities. Second, the project is designed to engage homeless young people in the co-construction of knowledge and the co-creation of action, through the use of participatory research methods. The presentation focuses on early findings and insights gained during the first exploratory phase of ethnographic fieldwork, as well as other insights gained through interviews and the photo voice method. There have been indications of a 'clash of cultures' in terms of different life worlds, values and lifestyles coming together. Furthermore, the research experience in the beginning of the first phase indicates that value-loaded investigations of food choices would be inappropriate. This gives reason to think about the relativity of 'wellbeing' and 'health', and how much choice one really has. This presentation reflects critically on the possibilities and limitations of the 'healthy expectations' of the researcher, the organisation, and policy-makers.

 Session One

Connecting the Ghanaian Primary School Teacher Characteristics to Pupils' Academic Achievement: A Secondary Data Analysis

Maxwell Kwesi Nyatsikor | Education

There are several ways of measuring the quality of education and chief among them is the quality of pupils' achievement in exams. There, however, appears to be a decline in the academic performance of pupils across many nations over the years with a few exceptions. In their attempt to raise the quality of pupils' academic achievement, governments, non-governmental organisations, researchers, educators and policy makers have suggested and offered diverse remedies. The home, school, teachers and pupils have all been cited as contributing to the quality of education. This study, however, focuses on the role played by teachers. Some researchers are of the view that if anyone is serious about improving the academic levels for all students, then this improvement will be obtained only by reducing the likelihood that students will be assigned to relatively ineffective teachers. Using secondary data from Ghana, this study adopts a quantitative approach to examine the impact of teacher characteristics (gender, academic qualification, professional qualification, and experience) on primary 6 pupil's academic performance in the National Education Assessment examinations. I am of the view that this study will promote knowledge and understanding within and beyond the field of education.



The Contemporary Blackening and How It Has Evolved

Sheila Mary Young | Elphinstone Institute

In Scotland, over thirteen thousand young people become homeless every year, food poverty is on the rise, and concerns about the influences of the recent welfare reform are being raised. Young people experiencing homelessness can face severe economic and other difficulties on an everyday basis. They can struggle to eat healthily, which has implications for their ongoing development. This project draws on and is shaped by a number of disciplines: health promotion; nutrition; education; and sociology. It is guided by underpinning values of egalitarianism, emancipation and empowerment. It is designed, first, to explore the food choices of homeless and vulnerable young people. The research aims to address (and challenge) policies targeted at reducing food-related health and socio-economic inequalities. Second, the project is designed to engage homeless young people in the co-construction of knowledge and the co-creation of action, through the use of participatory research methods. The presentation focuses on early findings and insights gained during the first exploratory phase of ethnographic fieldwork, as well as other insights gained through interviews and the photo voice method. There have been indications of a 'clash of cultures' in terms of different life worlds, values and lifestyles coming together. Furthermore, the research experience in the beginning of the first phase indicates that value-loaded investigations of food choices would be inappropriate. This gives reason to think about the relativity of 'wellbeing' and 'health', and how much choice one really has. This presentation reflects critically on the possibilities and limitations of the 'healthy expectations' of the researcher, the organisation, and policy-makers.



Music for Saint Magnus

Gemma McGregor | Music

Composing and performing music for a saint serves to preserve their presence in the living culture of a community. Magnus Erlendsson was the first Earl of Orkney, ruling from 1108 to between 1115 and 1117. Magnus' story is told in the Orkneyinga Saga—written by an unknown Icelandic author in about 1200—which describes the conquest of Orkney by Norway and the history of the Earldom that followed. The story was retold by George Mackay Brown in his novel, *Magnus*. Two earls, Magnus and Haakon, reigned jointly until Magnus was ordered to be murdered by Haakon. Magnus' bones were laid to rest in Birsay and were later transferred to Kirkwall Cathedral. Many legends arose about the saintliness of Magnus, particularly his pacifism—unusual for a man of his time—and he was canonized in 1192. Historical examples of music from the liturgy associated with Saint Magnus are fourteenth-century plainchant, the hymn, *Nobilis Humilis*, and fragmentary pieces of Norwegian and Icelandic medieval liturgical music. The Orkney Schola, a Gregorian chant group led by Ben Whitworth, is working towards a performance of the Office of St Magnus based on medieval sources. Sir Peter Maxwell Davies has written music based on the Magnus legend, notably, *Hymn to Saint Magnus* (1972) and *The Martyrdom of Saint Magnus* (1976). I have written, *The Boy, Magnus* (2002), *Anthem for Saint Rognvald* (2008) and *The Last Bright Rinsing* (2013). I am influenced by the work of Maxwell Davies and Mackay Brown and write music that forges links between inherited culture and living tradition. I had made a study of Orkney music and its Norwegian rather than Scottish roots, and am keen to explore the idea that Orcadian art expresses a unique cultural heritage.