
Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review

Journal origins

Policy and Practice is a peer reviewed, bi-annual, open access journal published by the Centre for Global Education, a development organisation based in Belfast. First published in 2005, *Policy and Practice* aims to provide a space for global education practitioners to critically reflect on their practice and debate new policy developments. The journal was a carefully considered strategic response to capacity and communication deficits within the development education (DE) sector in Ireland identified through research commissioned by our national platform, Dóchas, in 2002. These deficits included: collaborative weaknesses within the sector and a marginalized status within mainstream education provision; the inadequate promotion of DE practice locally and internationally; a lack of opportunities to share new research at third level; and weak inter-sectoral links between DE and other 'educations'. The journal has helped to address these deficits by creating opportunities for development educators to share good practice and to learn from the work of colleagues in the global North and South.

Policy and Practice is hosted on a stand-alone web site (www.developmenteducationreview.com) with all previous editions archived and available for viewing and downloading. Each issue addresses concepts and themes central to global education policy and practice, and invites contributions from academics, education practitioners, non-governmental organisations, statutory bodies and civil society groups. A major strength of the journal is its increasing number of contributors from other parts of Europe, North America and the global South.

Reader survey

The Centre for Global Education regularly consults readers on the content of the journal and the layout of the web site. The most recent consultation with (100) journal stakeholders published in June 2015 found that 96% of readers 'strongly agree or agree' that *Policy and Practice* 'makes an important contribution to building the capacity of the development education sector across Ireland'. 87% 'strongly agreed or agreed' that the journal 'encourages networking and active communication between development educators'. The overall impression garnered by the evaluation is that the journal is having a fundamentally positive impact on DE practice across the island of Ireland.

The 2015 survey showed that 40% of readers defined themselves as representatives of the higher education sector and 34% from the development education sector which suggests that *Policy and Practice* achieves a good balance in readership between academia and practitioners. The remaining 26% came from a mix of sectors (youth, community, adult, schools etc). Nearly 70% of respondents had used the journal in support of academic research and over 40% had used the journal as a teaching aid in higher / tertiary education. The survey also found that over 50% of respondents used the journal 'in the workplace (development NGO, community organisation,

Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review

development education centre etc)' so for development educators the journal supports their professional development and assists their work-based practice such as training and advocacy work.

Supporting DE practitioners

The value of the journal to practitioners is underlined by the fact that the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA), the national development education network in Ireland, stated in its current Capacity Development plan that "The journal *Policy and Practice* has provided a high quality, peer-reviewed international forum for the exploration and sharing of current DE policy and research. Continued support for *Policy and Practice* is necessary if the DE sector is to maintain a viable policy and research dimension". IDEA has recognized that *Policy and Practice* should be central to the promotion of and debate on new research in development education and its implications for DE policy. The 2015 evaluation included comments from readers on how *Policy and Practice* had influenced their practice:

"Reading P&P (Policy and Practice) has influenced programme strategy and design, and has enabled me to connect with others working in the DE sector".

"P&P highlights burning issues for the sector and provides the evidence base for discussion and debate on those issues".

"P&P provides practical examples for initiating policies and presenting innovative ideas".

"Articles from P&P are on my core reading list. I have also written about my teaching experiences for the journal".

"P&P raises key issues which are not covered elsewhere and as such provides key readings for post-graduate and undergraduate social science students".

Users of the journal

Between 2005 and 2009, *Policy and Practice* was published in a hard copy format which had limited circulation and was expensive to produce. In autumn 2009, the journal's Editorial Group decided to publish the journal online with its own designated web site. The advantages included making the entire journal archive available online in an open access format to a wider, international audience. Since 2009, the journal's readership has accelerated to more than 100,000 per annum and is truly international. For example from January to December 2015 the journal web site received 147,000 visitors, of whom 120,000 were unique visitors. The top ten locations of visitors were: United States (22,712); United Kingdom (21,659); Philippines (15,219); India (14,444); Canada (5,573); Kenya (5,510); Australia (5,025); Ireland (3,227); South Africa (3,187); and Indonesia (2,956). These statistics suggest that development education is practiced around the world and has an expanding audience in the global South.

In March 2015, the journal's funder, Irish Aid, invited the Centre for Global Education to publish a special Tenth Anniversary Limited Edition hard copy collection of the most cited articles published in *Policy and Practice* over the previous decade. This special issue reflected the breadth of issues covered by the journal including: sustainability and

Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review

climate change; neoliberalism and the financial crisis of 2008; policy changes for development education in the European Union; and relationships between higher education institutions in the global North and South. 21 issues have been published to date and the next issue will focus on the lessons that development education can learn from civil society movements and progressive governments in Latin America ©

[For more information on the journal contact:](#)

Stephen McCloskey

Editor

Policy and Practice

9 University Street

Belfast

BT7 1FY

E: stephen@centreforglobaleducation.com

Web: www.developmenteducationreview.com