
Contemporary Issues in Technology Education New Zealand

Editorial

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This edition of the ACE PAPERS is a student edition featuring papers written by students studying technology education at Auckland University's Faculty of Education (and prior to amalgamation, the Auckland College of Education). The papers cover a range of issues effecting technology education across early childhood, primary and secondary sectors.

The writers selected to publish were final year students or practicing teachers who were invited to use their assignments as a base to prepare a paper to go through the process of peer review for publication.

Linda Flavell highlights the confusion in early childhood education (ECE) between the terms information and communication (ICT) in technology education. She states the need for research to identify pedagogical and integration issues within New Zealand ECE contexts. She argues that a baseline is needed to ensure guidelines are relevant to practice within ECE in order to give direction for professional development in ECE around ICT integration.

Catherine Biggs investigated literature surrounding gender inequalities in technology education. She considered why girls in particular are less exposed to the necessary construction play that builds technological capability and the effect that this has on girls. Biggs then reviewed literature surrounding classroom teachers' pedagogy and practices to suggest how gender bias can be reduced in technology.

Sophia Douglas interviewed eight beginning teachers who taught children from years 1 to 4. The majority of these teachers were positive about their technology education training, although many teachers found they had not been prepared for the realities of teaching a technology unit. They also expressed the problematic nature of and the difference between their understandings of technology education compared with that of experienced teachers. Douglas uses the extensive research of Grudnoff and Tuck to support her findings.

Martin Ball has a unique writing style which challenges the norms in both content and form. His paper on implementing the technology curriculum in New Zealand is based on international research findings. Ball compares the implementation of technology education with that of other curriculum areas in New Zealand and internationally. Although at times I disagree with his findings I find his paper challenging and thought provoking and worthy of publication because of this.

Melissa Down contacted 41 West Auckland primary schools and received agreement from 20 of these schools to participate in her research into whether and how schools

are catering for 'gifted and talented' technology students. Her findings emphasise the lack of support for our gifted and talented students in technology education. From these results Down poses numerous future research questions.

Pamela Tolich undertook an extensive research project into secondary school students' views towards technology education and their future careers. Her research has been divided into two papers. The first paper researches views from 43 Year 9 students who were undertaking a compulsory course of technology education. Their views of technology education and its relevance to themselves and their career are investigated. Tolich's second paper investigates views of 38 Year 11 and 20 Year 13 students. Half these students had not selected technology as a subject, their views being contrasted with those who had. This paper compares these findings with those of the previous Year 9 study.

These papers reflect the personal understandings developed by the 'students' during their investigation of their selected topic. Students were required to develop and implement a small research project or an extensive literature review. While the literature explored goes well beyond the material initially presented in the course, it does not necessarily cover all the relevant literature as time was a limiting factor.

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