

Editorial

JTES for Sustainable Development: An Action Research Environment for the Development and Sustainable Future of the Journal Identity

Greetings from the team of Editors-in-Chief of the *Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability* (JTES). In the current issue, the studies and their main findings are presented by ten articles from 11 countries: Finland, Sweden, Latvia, Slovenia, Portugal, Australia, Nigeria, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Iran. The authors of the articles have worked in international teams or conducted research individually. Working together with authors, consultants and reviewers, we have prepared JTES Issue 1, Volume 22. We hope that in this joint work, readers will have the opportunity to find valuable ideas in accordance with their own interests and those of all humankind to find a way to a sustainable future and education.

The JTES becomes even more recognizable. Popularity of JTES is growing. Cite Score of the Journal is also gradually changing: from 0.64 in 2015 to 1.85 in 2018 and 3.4 in 2019 (<https://www.scopus.com/sourceid/17700156732>).

We will introduce readers to the authors and articles of this issue with an insight into the preconditions, current requirements and future perspectives that have influenced the establishment of the JTES and the formation of the Journal identity. As it stands, the Journal identity and the experience of the JTES team serve as a framework for the very complex evaluation, selection and coordination of articles and thematic diversity with authors.

The establishment of the JTES was not only a direct goal of the Journal. In the beginning, it was visualized as an idea for a journal, which would be included in an environment of cooperation between educators and researchers, where the interests of network members would coincide with the interests of the journal. The establishment of the JTES is the result of international collaboration promoted through an open dialogue on the reorientation of teacher education towards sustainability, which was sought on the basis of participatory action research and initiated at the beginning of the 21st century. It has been 20 years since the purposeful creation of an environment for international cooperation in establishing and maintaining the Baltic and Black Sea Consortium for Educational Research for ESD (BBCC). An article on the formation of the network and the establishment of the Journal through action research is available in the journal *Discourse and Communication for Sustainable Education (DCSE)*, vol. 6, pp. 21–29, 2015.

The networking environment and the use of an action research approach became the basis for the establishment of the Journal. The Journal gained its identity through a dialogue at annual international conferences of the BBCC network and JTES during the period of 2002–2018. In 2007, the JTES was included in the Scopus database. It contributed to the recognition of the Journal, and the open discussion in it facilitated

the evaluation, integration and synthesis of participants' experiences in recognizing and conceptualizing practical and theoretical concepts. These discussions have highlighted the current traditional requirements of the JTES, which are taken into account in the first selection of submitted articles, i.e., the content of articles should focus on research or experience conceptualization addressing such issues as *reorienting teacher education towards sustainability, the phenomenon of sustainability, sustainable education and sustainable development*.

After 2015, the JTES experience and responsibility in the field of educational research for ESD increased. It was also fueled by growing unsustainability that intensified in global development and education. The interests of higher education were influenced by attracting funding and more efficient governance. Since 2018, the organization of annual BBCC conferences has slowed down due to new difficult circumstances and obstacles, which are already showing progress towards unsustainability. Daugavpils University has undertaken its duty to maintain the JTES and DCSE journals and, as appropriate, to maintain the BBCC as a network around the two scientific journals, open to authors of both journals who choose to collaborate with one or both scientific journals and whose research interests and objectives correspond to the specific interests of the journals. The dialogue with the authors whose articles are selected for publication takes on a different format and becomes a dialogue on coordination of research ideas and specific interests of the JTES. The editors of the Journal and some of the reviewers participate in coordination work, which has become a learning process through real educational research for ESD for both the authors and the JTES team.

We develop a mutual learning dialogue with authors in each issue, whose articles are selected for publication as they meet the requirements of the JTES. In this issue, we present ten articles, which show that educational research for ESD examines issues relevant to humanity and education. Their diversity demonstrates the authors' commitment to life and their direct and indirect vision of relationships and attitudes through the values of educational researcher's work. These articles are now offered to readers so that the learning initiated in the dialogue between the authors and the Journal can continue and inspire us to use deeper and broader educational research for ESD to transform activities of different levels and content into sustainability.

The paper by **Anna-Liisa Elorinne, Lasse Eronen, Milja Pollari, Johanna Hokkanen, Helen Reijonen and Jamie Murphy** is part of a large Sustainable Food Education research project regarding school and household food waste (FW). The main aim of the research project is to find out the role of education in influencing the sustainable FW behavior. In the present paper, the authors have examined Finnish comprehensive school teachers' attitudes towards FW and teachers' personal and pedagogical practices concerning FW education.

The paper by **Marco Ferreira, Baiba Martinsone and Sanela Talić** discusses how to promote social emotional learning (SEL) at school. Teachers implement specific programs, but they have difficulties in incorporating SEL into the regular curriculum. The main aim of the paper is to present the conceptual model of sustainable integration of SEL into everyday teaching practices in every subject. This approach started with the project "Learning to Be: Development of Practices and Methodologies for Assessing Social, Emotional and Health Skills within Education Systems". The article is based on the premise that the assessment of learning at school should go beyond grading students'

knowledge, and the conceptual approach integrates SEL standards, formative assessment and classroom instruction into a single sustainability-oriented model.

The paper by **Stellan Sundh** presents a study about integrating school practice in teacher education programs in order to make teacher education sustainable by attracting more students, limiting the number of dropouts and improving the quality of education. In the project at a Swedish university campus, the students worked as teacher candidates one day a week at different primary schools during their first semester. The aim was to identify the didactic dilemmas teacher students experienced in classrooms with 6- to 12-year-olds. By analyzing the students' written reports, the results indicate that the dilemmas identified by the students relate to classroom management, lesson content and relationship establishment with children.

The paper by **William Nketsia, Maxwell Peprah Opoku, Timo Saloviita and Danielle Tracey** reflects on the Sustainable Development Goal 4 that ensures that all children, youths and adult should have equitable access to quality inclusive and lifelong learning opportunities by 2030. To achieve this ultimate goal, teacher education should be reoriented to equip teachers with knowledge, skills and practices to create and enjoy sustainable future. The study intends to contribute to literature on the orientation of teacher education to attain the sustainable development goals. The main objectives were to determine the inclusive pedagogical practices, values, knowledge and skills acquired by trainees during the Special Education Needs (SEN) course. The study reflects that the medical model view of special needs is dominant in the SEN course and the course places less emphasis on inclusive knowledge, values and pedagogical approaches, which are critical to the achievement of sustainable development goals. The paper also discusses the key factors that can promote the development of inclusive pedagogical practices, knowledge and values related to sustainable development.

The paper by **Hyginus Osita Omeje, Godwin Keres Okereke and Daniel Uchenna Chukwu** addresses the issue of raising the waste reduction awareness that comprises causes and reduction measures, as well as the awareness of students and construction site workers at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka community. The study uses collaborative action research to call for a change in behavior towards construction waste. The results showed that education with focus on sustainability was required to promote change in perception. As the status and qualification of individuals change through education, their skills, knowledge and awareness should equally improve towards construction waste. It is equally right to begin in the advocates' environment.

The paper by **Bulan Prabawani, Sudharto P. Hadi, Irina Safitri Zen, Teuku Afrizal and Dinalestari Purbawati** deals with the issue of education for sustainable development by linking environmental changes with student's character building. It describes the relationship between student's environmental knowledge, attitudes and behaviors and its challenging factors. Students at adolescent age are at a stage of high emotional growth that encourages change in attitudes and behavior. School students with low environmental and social knowledge have good attitude and behavior concerning the environment. Obstacles in social environment become a significant moderating variable. The study implicates the need to develop a program that emphasizes the ability to analyze and synthesize the surroundings.

The study by **Parinya Meesuk, Banleng Sramoon and Angwara Wongrugsu** discusses the issue of the educational providers in developing countries. Classroom action research-based instruction has been implemented for years to improve teachers' profession and

students' learning. The teachers who apply classroom action research-based instruction have significantly higher outcomes. It is the way which is flexible to the local context to increase both teacher and student outcomes sustainably. The results indicate that most teachers conduct informal classroom research to solve children behavior problems and to encourage the development of children. The consequences of the classroom action research-based instruction are significantly higher than the standard requirement instruction.

The paper by **Davoud Amini, Sima Najafi and Bahram Behin** presents a qualitative study intended to explore the nature of moral dilemmas in language classes and teachers' criterial beliefs in responding to these dilemmatic situations. Educating teachers for sustainability requires that teachers be considered as the mediators of change. To achieve this goal, a constructive teacher-learner relationship is essential where values and ethicality play a crucial role. A systematic coding analysis of the recorded interviews with eight Iranian experienced EFL teachers revealed that they referred to their knowledge, experience, intuitive sense as well as the teaching context and learners' history as sources of their moral judgment. The findings on teachers' moral identity uphold implications for teacher education.

The paper by **Mohammad Hassani and Mahdi Najjari** investigates the inequality of opportunity of access to higher education centers and provides a model of reducing inequality of opportunities and administering justice and fairness to achieve sustainable development among 17 cities and towns of West Azerbaijan Province, Iran. The research was descriptive-analytic and survey type in nature. The participants included 890 pre-university high school students. The documents adopted from the responsible governmental bodies on this topic were analyzed. This study revealed that a three-componential model (education, admission, and family-individual) along with their sub-components could be the basis for achieving ESD.

The paper by **Mansoor Ganji, Elnaz Kargar Arshadi and Sogand Mahbubzadeh** discusses the importance of sustainable development in developing countries and a lack of research on this topic among Iranian English teachers. This study aims at investigating the Iranian English teachers' awareness and understanding of this concept and the effects of demographic features on their understanding. The results revealed that although some teachers could not define the term, or provided a general or wrong definition of the term, more than half of the teachers rightly emphasized the economic aspect, protecting natural resources, and caring for present and future lives of people. The study offers implications for textbook developers, English teachers, and syllabus designers.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the authors for the opportunity to explore research ideas that are in our common interest: transforming action towards sustainable education and sustainable development at the global level. We have already mentioned that open action research continues to take place around the JTES and DCSE journals, involving authors and researchers who have found their way to the JTES. It is an engagement that begins with the submission and publication of an article. Dialogue with authors is affected by changes at the global and local levels and may be unforeseen due to global or local disasters or pandemics. These are critical signs of relations that humanity has ignored the commitments that have distorted the relationships that a person or one brings into living relations on the planet.

Covid-19 now reminds us all that in our perception of the world we have underestimated human kinship with nature and ignored the importance of the species, which is a naturally formed structure that is important in understanding and explaining the human world. The unity of the species allows us to understand the relationship between our life and the principles of the relationship between ecology and evolution. This reminder is also important to the JTES team that much remains to be done in educational research for ESD to understand the deepest human-made deformities that lead to unsustainability through action that, like sustainability, is transdisciplinary in nature. The reasons for its origins lie in the human-nature relationships and human attitudes. These relationships have long been established by humanity on the basis of anthropocentrism. Maintaining anthropocentrism in human-nature relationships has also influenced the attitude of science in general and influencing development of educational research for ESD to the idea of co-evolution, thereby exacerbating the failure to recognize the unsustainable activity of the human species at the level of individual and global behavior. The unsustainable development of these relationships in recent years has provided the basis for the identification of the Anthropocene era. In the Anthropocene conditions, the popularity of research that goes beyond Anthropocentrism is decreasing; for example, there is a decline in interest among researchers concerning adaptive management approaches, deep ecology, ecocentrism and more holistic perspectives on sustainability. The interest of research in maintaining co-evolutionary relationships has been diminished and is still being diminished by the prevailing unsustainability and non-ecological society's lifestyle based on fragmentation of phenomena and processes, disciplinary and regulatory approaches, competition, the addition of positivism and anthropocentrism with many mind and behavior habits of the consumer and egocentricity. The unsustainability of the global citizen's actions and the emergence of wicked problems caused by the human species' lifestyle are the reasons for more articulated research in education for ESD. And the possible current crisis situation is the last chance for the implementation of an idea of *human education through nature*. It was a clear and comprehensive idea in the holistic environmental education methodology in the last decade of the 20th century. This approach fits the JTES development in future. Action research will be used to recognize the educational wicked manifestations at different levels of this problem. It will use the natural foundations that have emerged in micro and macro evolution as a natural occurrence of the human species and humanity. The transdisciplinary action research will exploit the links with the environment, perception, undifferentiated identity, sustainable and self-generating prototype formation in the ecological sustainability relationship between the person and nature. Exploring the structure and content of Homo sapiens species, we will look for features that allow for the recognition of the co-evolutionary relationships between the human being and nature and maintain the deepest identity values of the prototype needed in self-generation processes. The JTES opened this road to the educational research for ESD through its dialog for sustainability in teacher education. The JTES invites to join this dialog and support the development of educational research for ESD, which is open for researches from diverse fields.

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