

| RESEARCH AREA & SOURCE | DESCRIPTION & MAIN FINDINGS / ARGUMENTS |
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| <p>Teacher Quality / Action Research <i>Paper presented at the 2006 AREA conference.</i></p> | <p>O'Connor, K., Greene, H. & Anderson, P. (2006) <i>Action Research: A Tool for Improving Teacher Quality and Classroom Practice.</i></p> <p>A study done with graduate students who were supported in engaging in action research projects in their classrooms.</p> <p>Main Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participants overwhelmingly found analyzing the data to be the most difficult aspect of engaging in action research ● Engaging in action research was reported by participants as having a positive impact on the teaching and learning process for both teachers and students, though the direct impact on student learning was reported by participants to be less than the impact on teaching. Researchers believe this is because much of the impact on teaching was reported by participants as being things they felt they could improve for the future. ● The participants overwhelmingly felt that participating in action research and built their confidence and empowered them as teachers, by increasing the amount of regular reflection they engaged in. Reflection helped them understand why students performed better and thus enabled them to make systematic improvements in their teaching. ● Such empowerment allows teachers to implement programs that are best for individual students. |
| <p>Teacher Quality ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education. Urban Diversity Series.</p> | <p>Goldhaber, D. & Anthony, E. (2003) <i>Teacher Quality and Student Achievement.</i></p> <p>A meta-analysis of studies on retention. For the purposes of the analysis teacher quality was defined as the ability to produce growth in student achievement and based on this definition found that:</p> <p>Main Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● teacher quality can have a major impact on student achievement ● there is a wide range of effectiveness among teachers ● the impact of teacher effects can persist long after students have particular teachers ● the effects of teacher quality are more dramatic for low achieving students ● teacher qualifications, higher degrees and licensure do not correlate highly with student achievement (situations where teachers were teaching very advanced courses and had higher degrees in that particular area were an exception) ● beyond the first few years of teaching, teacher experience does not correlate highly with student achievement ● Positive correlations between teachers' general academic proficiency and student achievement were found in an overwhelming majority of studies investigating this variable |

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| <p>Teacher Quality</p> <p><i>Sydney Morning Herald</i></p> <p>May 21, 2007</p> | <p>Garnaut, J. (2007) Best teachers get top marks from study.</p> <p>This study conducted by the Australian National university correlated student scores on standardized tests in literacy and numeracy in years 3 and 5 with information about individual teachers.</p> <p>Main Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the top 10 percent of teachers from the state of Queensland in Australia are twice as effective as the bottom 10 percent, achieving in 6 months what the bottom 10 percent take a year to achieve. ● Female teachers are more likely to improve student literacy ● Male teachers are more likely to improve students' mathematical skills ● There was no positive effect for teacher qualifications |
| <p>Student Retention</p> <p><i>Contemporary Education, 61:4</i></p> <p>p.204</p> | <p>Norton, S. (1990) Practical Alternatives to Student Retention.</p> <p>A meta-analysis of research into student retention with suggestions for alternatives to the practice.</p> <p>Main Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Retention does not increase learning readiness for most pupils ● Retention does not increase learning ● Retention does not improve socialization ● Retention tends to promote discipline problems ● Most current solutions to the problem are oversimplifications ● In one study 48% of teachers and 26% of principals believe that retention is an effective strategy for dealing with at-risk students ● In another study 89% of teachers thought it had been an effective strategy with their pupils ● Well-informed parents can be instrumental in stopping the practice ● “More of the same” is unlikely to produce positive outcomes and so intervention programs are far more effective than retention ● Remediation is cheaper than paying for an extra year of schooling ● High teacher expectations for all students are critical in ensuring student success ● Organization of instruction by age-based Grades may not be the most effective method ● Questions need to be asked about teacher effectiveness as part of retention decisions as students should not be punished for inadequate instructional; strategies. |
| <p>Student Retention</p> <p><i>Journal of</i></p> | <p>Meisels, S. (1993) Failure in Grade: Do Retained Students Catch Up?</p> <p>Includes a meta-analysis of research into retention. The study then goes on to analyze the data on 16,623 8th grade students from 1,052 schools the National Education Longitudinal Study on 1988 in the US, the most comprehensive longitudinal study ever undertaken in the U. S. 2,075 of the 16,623 students in the study were reported to have been retained in Grades K – 3 and 1,128 were reported to have</p> |

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| <p><i>Educational Research 87:2 p.69</i></p> | <p>been retained in Grades 4 – 8.</p> <p>Main Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minority students were retained in significantly higher proportions than Whites ● Male retainees outnumber females ● More retentions were instigated by the school than by parents ● Early retainees (retained K – 3) had significantly higher grades than later retainees and also had significantly lower chances of having behavioral problems ● Retained students had significantly higher incidents of learning, emotional and behavioral problems ● Girls retained later were more likely to have emotional problems than boys were (explained by researchers by the differing needs of adolescent girls for family and peer relationships) ● Higher socio-economic status students had more emotional problems when retained early than lower SES students. |
| <p>Assessment / Leadership</p> <p><i>Phi Delta Kappan 77:3 p. 246</i></p> | <p>Cizek, G. (1995) The big picture in assessment and who ought to have it.</p> <p>In the opinion of Gregory Cizek the principal has the primary responsibility for systematizing assessment so that all assessments carried out have a well-articulated purpose, and assessment information is used to improve the school’s program.</p> <p>Main Arguments:</p> <p>Principals Need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have an intimate knowledge of what is happening in classrooms ● Ensure that educational aims are clearly identified ● Ensure that strategies are identified for assessing those aims (including ensuring that assessments are devised for aims that currently lack them AND that redundancy is reduced) ● Ensure that the information gleaned from assessments is reported in a real and relevant way to stakeholders and is ultimately used to further the educational mission of the school <p>Cizek suggests that beyond becoming assessment-literate themselves, principals could set up an advisory committee to help them with the task of creating a ‘planned assessment system’.</p> |
| <p>Educational Change</p> <p><i>Education</i></p> | <p>Viadero, D. (2007) In Whole-School Reform, Staying True to Model Matters.</p> <p>A study conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) where the progress of 650 elementary and middle schools was tracked. Half of the schools were implementing one of 8 packaged self improvement models and half were using no formal schoolwide reform program. The findings are based on longitudinal surveys of principals, teachers and district administrators, successive waves of</p> |

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| <p>Week May 14, 2007</p> | <p>test-score data and case studies conducted at 24 of the experimental schools.</p> <p>Major Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In practice schools not using reform packages did not look all that different from those using them (researchers postulate that what schools perceive as good ideas quickly spread to other schools) ● Over the five years of the study there was no significant difference in student gains on math and reading tests between the two groups of schools. ● On closer examination the results were more complex - between the third and the fifth year of implementation schools that had stayed true to their school improvement models experienced achievement gains that outpaced those of comparison schools ● Experimental schools which had not adhered as closely to the reform program guidelines did not experience these increased gains and achieved results no different from control schools. ● Some reform programs produced better results than others |
| <p>Teaching Strategies / Educational Change / Assessment</p> | <p>Hayes, D., Mills, M., Christie, P. and Lingard, B. (2006) <i>Teachers and Schooling Making a Difference: Productive pedagogies, assessment and performance</i>. Crows Nest : Allen & Unwin</p> <p>This is a book written using the results of the Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study (2001), which launched the New Basic program in Queensland. The study began by observing classrooms attempting to determine the pedagogical and assessment practices which correlated with student achievement, then moved on to attempt to determine the school structural characteristics which supported those pedagogies. They distilled 20 elements of what they termed productive pedagogy and grouped them into four dimensions. Some of the major findings as reported in the book are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pedagogy and assessment do make a difference to student achievement, especially for disadvantages students ● The intellectual quality of classroom activities correlated strongly with student academic achievement ● Supportive classroom pedagogies also correlated strongly with student academic achievement ● Connectedness to the world correlated with students academic achievement but not as strongly as intellectual quality or supportive classroom pedagogies ● There was no correlation between valuing difference and academic achievement but this did correlate with significant positive social outcomes. ● A crowded curriculum reduces the latitude for teaching for depth of understanding ● What the study termed as productive pedagogies, assessments and performances were not widely found to be in practice in classrooms ● There was a widespread absence in classrooms of expectations for students to understand other cultural knowledges. ● There was a large disconnect between what teachers reported as their goals for their students' education on surveys and the |

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| | <p>practices that took place in their classrooms both in pedagogy and assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students who received intellectually challenging tasks mediated by supportive classroom pedagogies are more likely to remain engaged in learning ● The structural aspects which supported productive pedagogy and assessment were: valuing of teachers and their knowledge and ongoing learning, dispersed leadership across the school, a culture of linking teachers' ongoing learning to the enhancement of student learning, a culture of professional dialog and pedagogically focused leadership. <p>The four dimensions and 20 elements of productive pedagogy were:</p> <p><u>Intellectual Quality</u> - problematic knowledge, higher-order thinking, depth of student understanding, substantive conversation, metalanguage</p> <p><u>Connectedness</u> – connectedness to the world beyond the classroom, knowledge integration, background knowledge, problem-based curriculum</p> <p><u>Supportive Classroom Environment</u> – student direction, explicit quality performance criteria, social support, academic engagement, student self-regulation</p> <p><u>Working with and Valuing Difference</u> – cultural knowledges, active citizenship, narrative, group identities in learning communities, representation</p> |
| <p>Curriculum Implementation / Leadership</p> <p>Curriculum Perspectives</p> <p>27:1 pp 26 - 39</p> | <p>Lo, Y. (2007) <i>The micro-politics of curriculum leadership.</i></p> <p><i>This paper consists of three case studies of curriculum coordinators in Hong Kong primary schools and attempts to look into how they deal with micro-politics in their schools while implementing curriculum reforms mandated by the Hong Kong government.</i></p> <p>Main Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Leadership styles which rely on personal interaction with informal contact are more effective than authoritarian leadership styles for curriculum coordinators.</i> ● <i>Curriculum coordinators need to consider the micro-politics of their school situation when planning their implementation strategies.</i> |
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