

Issue 1 | Autumn 2020

Leadership Educational Effectiveness & Policy Centre

LEEP News

New Members

In spring, LEEP welcomed a new staff member in **Nicola (Nic) Pensiero** who joined us from University College London. Nic previously worked at UCL Institute of Education, where he joined in 2013 after completing his PhD at the European University Institute. He is an interdisciplinary researcher with a good record of leading externally funded education research projects.

His expertise lies in the use of analytical and choice-based approaches in studying social phenomena such as education programme effectiveness, comparative analysis of the effectiveness of education system characteristics, inequality in educational attainment, school segregation and income inequality.

Nic is currently the Principal Investigator for on a Nuffield foundation grant on Educational choices and social interactions. Reassessing Educational Strategies in a divided Society (ERESS)

<https://sites.google.com/view/nicolapensiero/new-project-eress>. funded period: July 2020 - December 2021.

He is also a Co-I on a Nuffield foundation grant on Post-16 Educational Trajectories and Social Inequalities in Political Engagement. PI: Germ Janmaat, Other Team members: Funded period: April 2020 to September 2021.

About

The Leadership Educational Effectiveness & Policy (LEEP) centre brings together colleagues working and researching in the areas of leadership, school improvement, educational effectiveness and policy. We aim to influence policy, practice and research methodology across a wide spectrum of educational contexts and sectors including schools and further / higher education.

Centre members have a long and distinguished history of external funding from a range of sources including government agencies, charities and research councils, and have played leading roles in advising policy-makers in the UK and internationally. Members are very active in editing journals, serving on editorial boards and taking leadership roles within the academic community.

Departed Members

Best wishes to **Prof Daniel Muijs** who left us to take over as Head of Research at Ofsted. Daniel remains a visiting professor and continues to contribute to our centre.

Research News

James Hall has recently published an edited collection together with colleagues from Oxford which brings together chapters written by key authors in the field, including current colleagues from the LEEP and Southampton visiting professors:

Hall, J., Lindorff, A. and Sammons, P. (Eds) (2020) International Perspectives in Educational Effectiveness Research. Springer Nature: Switzerland.

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-44810-3>

James has also given two keynote presentations in 2020:

- Early Childhood Education and Care: Promises and problems reconciling research evidence with policy. Trends in Education Development Conference. Keynote. (Moscow, Russia. February 2020)
- Key findings from the early learning goals pilots. Progress and lessons: Putting the pilot EYFS Profile & ELGs in context. Westminster Education Forum (London, UK. January 2020)

John Schulz has given a keynote paper eLearning – When does the learning start? for the 6th International Forum on Teacher Education, Kazan Federal University (9 June 2020). During this conference, John was also invited to a Round Table Discussion on Disseminating Research using Video.

Michael Tomlinson was a keynote speaker at Monash University's (Australia) School of Education annual Graduate Alumni conference which attracted just over 200 recent Monash graduates (August, 2019). The overall theme of the conference was career development and employability.

Chris Downey and Maria Kaparou have both presented at ICSEI and AERA on the outcomes of their Ambitions School Leadership research project:

Downey, C. (2020). Identifying key actors in informal collaborative networks in schools. Paper presented at the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement 33rd Annual Conference, Marrakech, Morocco.

Downey, C., Kaparou, M., Burg, D., & Kelly, A. (2019). Diagnosing school improvement priorities during the first year of a new Principal. Paper presented at AERA Annual Meeting, Toronto, Canada.

Kaparou, M., Downey, C., & Kelly, A. (2020). The role of MATs in supporting or intervening in less-performing schools to facilitate continuous improvement: Evidence from MAT schools in challenging contexts in England. Paper presented at International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement 33rd Annual Conference, Marrakech, Morocco.



Recent Research Projects

Learning Inequalities During the Covid-19 Pandemic: how families cope with home Schooling (Pensiero, N. Kelly, A, & Bohkove, C., 2020)

The transition from face-to-face to distance (home and online) schooling is likely to generate educational loss. Using data from Understanding Society, the UK Household Longitudinal Study, the research team estimated loss to be more pronounced for children from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds than for other children.



The transition from face-to-face to distance (home and online) schooling is likely to generate educational loss.

The research found that children in the most advantaged families, where both parents work regularly from home, the main parent is in a 'service class' occupation (large employers, managers of professionals) and the children have their own computer, spent on average 2.9 hours per day on school work for primary and

3.8 per day for secondary education. More disadvantaged children in families where the main parent is not in a service class occupation, where the child has to share a computer with other family members and either parent does not work regularly from home, the hours spent per day on school work are 2.3 for primary and 2.6 for secondary education.

The findings estimated that children from the most disadvantaged group will have lost a year's worth of progress across subjects by the reopening of schools in autumn, while children from the most advantaged group will have lost much less, especially in secondary education.

This project has generated much media interest, including in: [The Guardian](#), [MailOnline](#) and [phys.org](#).

Please contact one of the authors if you would like to read the research report.



Recent Research Projects

Ambitions School Leadership Project (Downey, C, Kelly, A & Kaparou, M.)

This research project, funded by the Ambition Institute (2019), presents findings from ten qualitative case studies of new-in-post headteachers working to secure school improvement in primary and secondary schools facing challenging circumstances. The range of data collected was based on two rounds of qualitative interviews with the headteachers and members of their senior leadership teams. In the first round, participants were asked questions about how they diagnosed, prioritised and carried out school improvement strategies. The second round was designed as follow up with the participants to inquire about the barriers to improvement that they experienced and their approaches to monitoring progress.

While each school had different needs and strategies based on their contexts, the findings indicate that multiple strands of school improvement activity were implemented concurrently, in a layered way. However, within the different strands of school improvement, many headteachers followed a common sequential set of steps to ensure those strands were working for the benefit of the students and staff in their school.

This study makes an important contribution to our existing knowledge through offering further insight into the complex and challenging first year in post of headteachers, whilst it will be of particular interest to current headteachers, prospective headteachers and others working in senior leadership positions in schools facing similarly challenging

circumstances. This report is also highly relevant to the work of anyone who supports headteachers in their school leadership, together with those who work to provide high-quality training and professional development for current headteachers; and especially those aspiring to headship.



Doctoral Scholarship and Success



Over the past year, many LEEP students have successfully completed their doctorates.

LEEP has a strong and dynamic doctoral community and its members have supervised many students to successful completion over the years. PhD graduate of the Southampton Education School, Amal Saleh Al Muqarshi, supervised by Prof. Tony Kelly and Dr Maria Kaparou, has been announced as the joint winner of the BELMAS Doctoral Thesis Award for 2019. BELMAS (the British Educational Leadership, Management & Administration Society) has for nearly fifty years been the UK's leading academic body for research in educational leadership and the award is considered a very prestigious one for researchers in the field. Amal's thesis ('Group dynamics and the construction of identities in Omani Higher Education: a case study of cultural diversity using a social identity approach') was deemed by the selection panel to have made the most important contribution to our understanding of educational leadership and policy.'

Over the past year, the following students have successfully completed their doctorates:

Lina Khalil's (2019): International schooling: a sociocultural study, PhD in Education. Supervisors: Tony Kelly and Maria Kaparou.

Moosavi, Salma (2019). Moving through post-16 Education: A mixed methods study of the characteristics and perspectives of level 2 vocational learners in England. PhD in Education. Supervisors, James Hall and Michael Tomlinson.

Lynsey Melhuish (2019). Exploring student perspectives of employer engagement as part of their HE learner journeys. Doctorate in Education. Supervisors Michael Tomlinson and Melanie Nind.

Manli Xu (2020). Using graduate capital to understand Chinese doctoral students' The employability of Chinese doctoral students, PhD in Education. Supervisors, Michael Tomlinson and Chris Downey.

Enas Alwarfi (2020). Exploring pre-service teachers' engagement in an online professional learning community. PhD in Education. Supervisors, Gary Kinchin and Chris Downey.

Meng Zhan (2020). The post-study labour migration of non-UK domiciled postgraduate students: Flows in reflexive modernity PhD in Education. Supervisor Martin Dyke and Chris Downey.

Recent notable publications from LEEP

The following publications are written by LEEP researchers:

Hall, J., & Malmberg, L-E. (Eds.) (in press). The contribution of Multilevel Structural Equation Modelling to contemporary trends in educational research. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*

Hall, J., Malmberg, L-E., Lindorff, A., Baumann, N., & Sammons, P. (2020). Airbag Moderation: The definition and implementation of a new methodological model. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education* [online first] <https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2020.1735334>

Al Muqarshi, A., Kaparou, M., & Kelly, A. (2020) Managing cultural diversity for collective identity: A case study of an ELT department in Omani higher education. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143220921187>

Downey, C., Burg, D., Kaparou, M., & Kelly, A. (2019). School improvement in challenging contexts: insights from ten new headteachers. London: Ambition Institute. London, UK: Ambition Institute.

Kelly, A. (2019) A new composite measure of ethnic diversity: investigating the controversy over minority ethnic recruitment at Oxford and Cambridge universities, *British Educational Research Journal*. 45(1):41-82. Open Access - FREE to download at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/berj.3482>

Kelly, A., Azaola, M.C. & Schulz, J. (2020) Island Voices: choice, equity and opportunity in Jersey schools, *Cambridge Journal of Education*. 10.1080/0305764X.2019.1604626

Pensiero, N. (2020). To leave or not to leave? Understanding the support for the United Kingdom membership in the European Union: Identity, attitudes towards the political system and socio-economic status. *Rationality and Society*.

Pensiero, N., & Schoon, I. (2019). Social inequalities in educational attainment: The changing impact of parents' social class, social status, education and family income, England 1986 and 2010. *Longitudinal and Life Course Studies*, 10(1), 87-108.

O'Riordan, T, Millard, D and Schulz J. (2020 in press) Is Critical Thinking Happening? Testing Content Analysis Schemes Applied to MOOC Discussion Forums. *Computer Applications in Engineering Education*

Iskru, V. V., and Schulz, J. (2020). How Postgraduate Students Use Video to Help Them Learn. *Contemporary Educational Technology*, 12(2), ep276. <https://doi.org/10.30935/cedtech/8400>

Tomlinson, M. & Jackson, D. (2020) Professional identity formation in higher education students, *Studies in Higher Education*, doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1659763

Jackson, M & Tomlinson, M. (2020) 'Investigating the relationship between career planning, proactivity and employability perceptions amongst higher education students in uncertain labour market conditions', *Higher Education (Higher Education)* doi.org/10.1007/s10734-019-00490-5

Alwafi, E.M., Downey, C. and Kinchin, G. (2020), "Promoting pre-service teachers' engagement in an online professional learning community: Support from practitioners", *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, Vol. 5 No. 2, pp. 129-146. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPC-10-2019-0027>

Recent notable publications from LEEP

Kinchin, G.D. (2019). Entering secondary physical education student teachers' expectations of their program of initial teacher training. *International Journal of Physical Education, Fitness and Sports*, 8(1), 85-94.

LEEP seminars this semester

Tuesday 3rd Nov. 12-1 p.m

PISA, student achievement and perceptions: it's not just about schools. (Organised by the Math, Science & Health Education research centre.)

Dr Mary Oliver & Dr Mike Adkins (University of Nottingham). What can we learn from Big Data in Education? Large data sets, PISA and NPD, provide opportunities to explore associations between different variables. We were interested in exploring instructional strategies and different aspects of 'affect' and aspirations on the PISA / GCSE scores. Comparing instructional approaches shows a complex picture: inquiry-based teaching shows positive associations with interest and engagement in science and negative associations with achievement. This is a controversial and contested finding but consistent across countries. We will look at some of the headline representations of PISA and share our analyses of instructional strategies, students' awareness of environmental issues and consider geo-political contexts.

Tuesday 17th Nov. 12-1 p.m

The Networked School Leader: How to Improve Teaching and Student Outcomes using Learning Networks

Professor Chris Brown, (Durham University). Education networks can facilitate a more willing distribution of professional knowledge; enable the development of context-specific strategies for school improvement; and even facilitate schools and others to share resources. At the same time, to achieve such benefits requires school leaders to consider how best to connect network activity to the day-to-day practices of their school. To explore this area a mixed methods approach (interviews, survey data and social network analysis) was used to examine models of networked leadership within schools participating in a Research Learning Network in Hampshire, England.

Tuesday 1st December, 12-1 p.m

Ethnic disproportionality in the identification of Special Educational Needs (SEN): A national longitudinal cohort age 5-11

Professor Steve Strand (University of Oxford). The talk presents the results of a recent DFE-ESRC funded study into ethnic disproportionality in the identification of SEN in England. The results reveal substantial ethnic disproportionality for some SEN. For example, Black Caribbean and Mixed White and Black Caribbean pupils are twice as likely to be identified with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties as White British pupils. Also, Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Other Asian) pupils are only half as likely to be identified with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) as White British pupils. To understand what might drive these outcomes, national administrative data are used to conduct a longitudinal analysis of the identification of SEN among over 550,000 pupils followed from age 5-11 years. Survival analysis is used to determine the Hazard Ratios (HRs) for time to first SEN identification, controlling for prior attainment and social-emotional adjustment at age 5 as well as socio-economic factors. For some SEN, like Moderate Learning Difficulties, ethnic over-representation can be accounted for by greater exposure to early risk factors. However, for SEMH and ASD the disproportionalities remain large even after adjusting for age 5 covariates. Both cultural factors and school processes that may contribute to disproportionality are discussed.