

Editorial

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The present volume is also the inaugural issue of the Rwandan Journal of Education (RJE) and on behalf of the Editorial Board; I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to all those who have had a hand in its realization, particularly those who submitted their works despite the short notice and those who have participated in reviewing and editing of the manuscripts. The idea of the development and subsequent publication of a journal dedicated to education had been conceived by Kigali Institute of Education (KIE) since 1999, and its pertinence was discussed in a number of academic and management forums, however, it was not until the KIE Board of Directors' meeting of 31st August 2011 that it was finally accorded the due impetus. The KIE Senate subsequently appointed the RJE Editorial Board on 27th December 2011, and mandated the latter to begin its functions in earnest. The editorial guidelines and logistic requirements were quickly established, schedules (for submission, peer reviewing and editing of manuscripts) developed, all of which have contributed to the eventual publication of this maiden edition.

The first RJE issue has been carefully put together, covering a range of issues in the domain of education, expressing among others, educators' professional concerns and experiences, scholarly analysis of teaching and learning experiences and practices, teachers' plights and performances, the learners' achievements and learning experiences in the schooling processes, and others. The Editorial Board owes special appreciation to the KIE academic staff as well as other contributors in the education profession and academia whose manuscripts have led to the initiation of RJE. Thanks to this step, scholars and educators in Rwanda and in the sub-region are already submitting their works for the next RJE publications, and it is expected that their articles will bring enriching benefits to academia, from which educators and researchers will continue to draw.

Kabanda, Role, Makewa & Ndahayo for example, share their research work, which departs from the national and international development goals that value people (employees) as fundamental resources, to explore the link between employees' persistence in work performance and job factors in education, where Kigali Institute of Education (KIE) is taken as a typical example of an educational organizations. Their findings prove a significant relationship between employees' persistence and job factors such as supervisory support and coaching, task design and organizational culture. The authors call upon educational institution leadership to draw lessons from the study, with which to improve employees' persistence as they strive to fulfill their performance contract of their work, which also implies improving job factors.

Cyprien Niyomugabo on the other hand, reveals his linguistic concerns and experiences. His work focuses especially on the uncontrollably growing blend of the three languages recognized by the Rwandan constitution of 2003 (Art. 5): *Kinyarwanda, French and English*. Accordingly, the combination of these, or '*marriage*' in his own words, is increasingly leading to yet another popular dialect in Rwandan educated communities that he coins as

'Kinyafranglais'. He probes the use of the three languages in both teaching and regular communications, questioning the impact of this *'Linguistic Marriage'* on the quality of teaching and learning in Rwandan schools. His work also proves his experiences in teaching languages, as he ably analyses "Kinyafranglais" potentiality as a pedagogical tool. His work prompts the readers to question this developing linguistic phenomenon, and its impact in any educational setting in particular and to the general society.

As his own title suggests, Mbityo's article presents to RJE's readers, controversial views on corrective measures used in homes and schools. Mainly based on literature reviews, it attempts to demonstrate the extent to which physical (corporal) punishments; a practice that is increasingly contested and forbidden by many education stakeholders is also regretted by some. Through analysis and reviews of international declarations, policies and research findings, the article shares children's, parents' and educators' points of views that includes their opposition to laws forbidding the use of physical punishments. His work did admittedly throw RJE editorial board into a heated debate, for its controversial views that seem to oppose the current trends in education developments, but it was eventually published for its stance that provide a basis for reflection to a range of educators that are also esteemed RJE readers.

Eugene Nsanzabiga seems to share the same school of thoughts with his colleague Cyprien. However, a closer comparison of their works, shows that the former takes a purely linguistic stance to analyze critically *'Kinyarwanda'* language as a language that is increasingly endangered or enriched by foreign cultural influences. Through in-depth investigation of the use of language in the media and education experiences, his work analyses the complex features of Kinyarwanda language with its multiplicity of morphemes and extra-ordinary lexical variability, and points out how it is continuously trapped in the process of what he coins as *'hybridization'*, that affects the most sensitive aspects of the language. He points to cultural crossbreeding that the Rwandan society has been undergoing for some years as the key source of this growing phenomenon. His work becomes of interest to both educators and linguists as it questioningly probes *'the standard Kinyarwanda today'*, *'the extent of foreign influences in the learning and teaching process'*. In his own words, the article sounds a wakeup call to all educators, and arouses them to reflect on their profession, and their obligation as key player in shaping future generations.

Though also in the domain of languages like the two previous authors, Olive Nabukeera's article dwells entirely on the issue of English teaching. Her comparative analysis of native and non-native English speakers in the teaching of English language draws from a range of literature sources and personal experiences in Ugandan education, to discuss professional marginalization and bias, the source of plight for qualified non-native English speakers. She explores issues related to accents and student's perceptions, to highlight on-job marginalization faced by teachers of English who do not necessarily fit snugly into the native and non-native dichotomy. Her article provides food for thoughts to planners and practitioners of Rwandan language education particularly, as the policy of English language in all schools is gaining ground.

Mugumya Amooti's article on '*Drama as cross-curricula*' brings to Rwandan education practice yet a relatively unique input. Through literature reviews, his work underlines pedagogical attributes and values that drama is endowed with, that could act as resourceful instruments in the teaching and instruction processes. He highlights key drama techniques such as role-play, impersonation, miming and dramatization as effective teaching tools that can be used across the curriculum. He suggests that using the techniques breaks the stereo-type monotony of traditional teacher – centered approaches, and adds that it could be of great benefit if a compulsory module of drama were part of the teacher training curriculum.

Nzabairwa and Nkiliye like Kabanda et al, have also been inspired by field surveys conducted in educational institutions. They investigated specifically the socioeconomic problems teachers in Rwandan public primary and secondary schools are faced with. Their work being originally commissioned by *COTRAF–Rwanda*¹, one of the Rwandan trade unions, it is not surprising that the article takes a clearly radical position as it inquires "*the extent to which the profession of teaching is recognized as a pillar of sustainable development in Rwanda*". Considering the teacher as the key contributor to national development, their investigation focuses mainly on his/her living conditions as the key issue at stake. Like a number of contributors to RJE, their findings compare policy and practice in an analytical and quite meaningful approach. They highlight the tremendous efforts deployed by the government of Rwanda to improve teachers' living conditions for example, to point out in a quantitative and qualitative analysis how far annual appraisals and promotions rates are still low; how these play a significant role in keeping teachers' salaries and subsequently their living conditions and motivation at the same levels. They conclusively underline the fact that Rwandan education can afford to do without other things but teachers, and therefore, the latter ought not to be subjects of perpetual socioeconomic difficulties or subsequent life predicaments.

However, being destined for international accreditations and standards it rightfully deserves, the present issue also signifies a foundation for ultimate greater reputations. RJE actually envisions a combination of on-line and print formats with a much wider and international contributions, as a means of rendering its publications more interactive and beneficial to a wider range of critical readers and competitive contributors. The support it has so far received, symbolizes the assurance of the determination to reinforce the highest standards and merits of RJE publications. It thus gives me immense pleasure and satisfaction to initiate this scholarly project, I express my gratitude to our well-wishers and contributors for their support, and I invite not only original and good quality manuscripts, but also constructive comments, suggestions and criticisms from our readers. I am confident that the articles in the journal will not only stimulate further debates and research in Education, but will also contribute to dialogues and discussions in education policy planning and implementation, and to all issues related to reform challenges and responses.

The Chief Editor

¹By its President's letter of 12th March 2012, COTRAF – Rwanda granted RJE permission to publish its research work carried out in November – December, 2009 by the two authors.