

Ronél Ferreira, Executive editor

Despite the challenges experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic over the past few years, the *The South African Journal of Education* has maintained its high standing. This is evident in the impact factor of 0.854 for the year 2021, with a 5-year impact factor of 1.204 (Journal Citation Reports, Social Sciences Edition, Clarivate Analytics, 2022). For the year 2022, three issues have been published thus far, with an additional two remaining for the rest of the year.

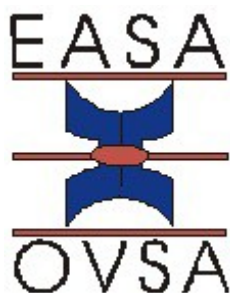
A call has gone out for the upcoming special issue, titled *Transitioning into calm after the COVID-19 storm: Promoting holistic support to achieve positive development outcomes for learners in schools*, under guest editorship of Prof Macalane Malindi and Prof Johnnie Hay from the North West University. Even though several abstracts have already been received, you are encouraged to submit your abstract or full manuscript for the issue, which addresses a timely issue. Following the past few years of turbulence, it can certainly be agreed that the support of learners in schools should take priority, with many of them currently being challenged to thrive at school based on their experiences during and post the pandemic period. The call for the special issue is included below.

In reflecting on my first term as executive editor of SAJE, which came to an end at the end of 2021, I am satisfied with the growth that the journal has shown, despite the challenges experienced during 2020 and 2021. The number of published articles was increased from an average of 9 to 11 per issue to a consistent 16 articles per issue, with the number of issues per year being increased from four per year to five issues annually. In addition, the impact factor has steadily increased, attesting to the standing of SAJE, not only on national level but also internationally.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the core team – Prof Liesel Ebersöhn (associate editor), Ms Estelle Botha (administrative editor) and Mr Thys de Jager (language editor), as well as the editorial committee members and all the reviewers of manuscripts, for the dedication and support during my first term of appointment. A special word of appreciation for continued support by the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria – under the leadership of Dean Professor Molatlhegi Trevor (Chika) Sehoole, for hosting the journal and providing infrastructure and resources to staff members. Lastly, thank you to the Education Association of South Africa (EASA) for re-appointing me as Executive editor for a second term, of which the first year is already ending. I look forward to continuing serving the scholarly community in Education over the next few years.

May the festive season that lies ahead be blessed for all EASA members. Please take time to rest and spend time with your loved ones. Looking forward to the in-person conference in Cape Town in January!

CALL FOR PAPERS: SPECIAL ISSUE



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Transitioning into calm after the COVID-19 storm: promoting holistic support to achieve positive developmental outcomes for learners in schools

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Guest editors: Macalane Malindi and Johnnie Hay

The worldwide coronavirus disease (COVID-19) brought about changes in various aspects of life. These changes particularly affected school education in a substantial way. Schools adopted alternative methods of curriculum delivery, such as the blended approach to teaching and learning. Schools in more affluent neighbourhoods seemingly coped better with the changes, thanks to the required technology, but those in disadvantaged neighbourhoods with scarce resources were often not in a position to adapt effectively. Learners experiencing barriers to learning were even more at risk since they usually require high levels of (face-to-face) support. Initially, because of global lockdowns, movement and contact among school stakeholders were minimised. Some families also lost loved ones and some of those who passed away were parents of school-going children.

While the family is regarded as an important microsystemic stronghold for learners, so are schools and the peer group (Theron & Engelbrecht, 2012; Ungar, 2012). Access to community services is equally important in enabling learners to cope resiliently in the context of risk and adversity. The lockdowns restricted learners to their homes/immediate surroundings and allowed fewer opportunities for them to navigate their pathways towards the resources that enhance well-being – mostly located outside their households. It can be argued that this rendered these learners at risk of poor developmental outcomes since they could not fully benefit from psychosocial and psycho-educational services in their contexts as they used to.

Considering the above, we propose a special issue to attract papers that explore the impact of the pandemic on learner development and the backlogs that may consequentially have developed. Furthermore, it is important to know about the services and protective factors that learners and teachers relied on to cope resiliently.

We invite papers that document risks/challenges experienced by teachers and learners, as well as interventions that enhanced/may enhance development of psycho-social-educationally vulnerable learners.

The themes may include (but are not restricted to) schooling issues regarding the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to:

- School-going children in out-of-home contexts
- Children in special schools
- Managing learner retention and the drop-out rate
- Managing the curriculum and eliminating backlogs in learning
- Supporting bereaved and orphaned children in schools

- School management issues during and after the pandemic (mainstream schools, special schools, rural schools, and independent schools)
- Supporting holistic development (psychological, social, physical, etc.) in children
- Early childhood education – backlogs and interventions
- Supporting school-going migrant learners
- Family disruption and instability and its impact on holistic development in children
- Familial disruption and instability and its impact on resilient coping
- Teacher and learner resilience
- Teacher stress and burnout
- Inclusion and psycho-social-educational support services

References

- Theron LC & Engelbrecht P 2012. Caring teachers: Teacher-youth transactions to promote resilience. In M Ungar (ed). *The social ecology of resilience: A handbook of theory and practice*. New York, NY: Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-0586-3>
- Ungar M 2012. Social ecologies and their contribution to resilience. In M Ungar (ed). *The social ecology of resilience: A handbook of theory and practice*. New York, NY: Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-0586-3>

All authors interested in contributing should submit their abstracts for screening to estelle.botha@up.ac.za by 21 October 2022.

Submit completed manuscripts for review to estelle.botha@up.ac.za.

Closing date for submissions: 15 November 2022