

READ REVIEW

SPRING SEMESTER 2021



IMMERSE, ENGAGE, HOST!

It has been an exciting and challenging Spring semester. CIIE has continued to engage with the community via virtual events and also prepared to host international Fulbright scholars at the KSU Hotel and Conference Center. In April, the CIIE team will welcome 20 scholars from Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and Central Asia, to the Kent community for a high impact academic and cultural program centered around US K-12 education and Media Literacy. Through the support of the US State Department Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs and IREX, KSU and local schools will host these educators for an immersive educational experience. We thank our local partner schools of Aurora, Streetsboro, Stow-Monroe Falls, Kenston, and Hudson for continuing to engage and contribute to the international and intercultural mission of CIIE, the College of Education, Health and Human Services and the Kent State community.

READ CENTER HOUSEKEEPING

- Great news! KSU will be resuming study abroad programming where possible in Fall 2021. Learn more by [visiting this webpage](#).
- CIIE continues to provide funding for virtual and in-person conferences on international and/or intercultural education. Contact Rose Onders at ronders@kent.edu for more details.
- CIIE and KSU have signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Universidad Espíritu Santo (UEES) in Guayaquil, Ecuador. UEES is a bilingual private university located in Samborondon. [Visit their website to learn more.](#)
- CIIE is currently looking for students to join its Student and Alumni Advisory Board. [Visit this webpage to apply.](#) It's a great opportunity to provide the center with feedback, share your voice, and help support international and intercultural initiatives.



**AGGARWAL-BLACKBURN
VISITING SCHOLAR
SPOTLIGHT: DR. BUSRA
BASAK OZYURT SOYTURK**

Dr. Busra Basak Ozyurt Soy Turk of Istanbul, Turkey received her doctoral degree in Science Education at Marmara University in Turkey. She has worked as a science teacher in public and private middle schools in Istanbul before moving to Kent.

She has been living in Kent for about five years and in the last two years, has been a visiting scholar in the Research, Measurement & Statistics program, working with Dr. Aryn C. Karpinski. Her research interests include test development in education and social sciences, assessment methods in science education, inquiry-based learning, and system thinking. Recently, her research paper focusing on developing a Smartphone Addiction Scale for Children was accepted as a poster to be presented at American Educational Research Association Conference in 2021. She has also become interested in Q Methodology after taking a Q Methodology class at Kent State University from Dr. Steven Brown, who is a very well-known expert on this topic.

Support our Scholars

Hosting visiting scholars like Dr. Soy Turk cultivates opportunity for groundbreaking research. Help us continue to encourage study and travel abroad, assist in internationalizing programs and develop global educational leadership.

[Learn more by visiting our webpage](#)

THE EXPULSION OF PREGNANT STUDENTS IN UGANDA: A CONTRAVENTION OF "EDUCATION FOR ALL"?

An Investigation by 2017 ILEP alumnus

Amoni Kitooke

Pregnancy and school are considered incompatible in many parts of the world, especially affecting teenagers in the global south. In Uganda, when a girl gets pregnant in primary (elementary) or secondary (middle and high) school, she is expelled without an assurance of ever returning. Some universities, especially religiously founded ones, also not only discontinue pregnant students but also prohibit pre- and extra-marital sexual relations. Although situations are changing, thanks to civil society sensitization regarding enrollment, many never return for fear of being scorned, for parenting responsibilities or the lack of requisite resources usually because parents are unwilling to sponsor "spoilt" daughters.

I am concerned that pregnant student expulsions contravene the 21-century aspiration for universal access to quality education. The expulsions are in spite of Uganda's ascription to pro-universal-education regulations like the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (see Article 26), the 1990 World Declaration of Education for All, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (see Article 28) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and promulgation of the country's own mechanisms like Universal Primary Education (UPE), Universal Secondary Education (USE) and the Universal Post-"O"-Level and Education and Training (UPOLET).

Uganda has no educational policy explicitly guiding on how pregnant and parenting students should be treated. Rather, schools devise their own rules often drawing on the puritan cultural and religious worldviews of pregnancy and pre-marital sex as horrible, thereby instigating and perpetuating the expulsions.

(continued page 4)



I came to the International Leaders in Education Program in 2017, having taught for over six years without it occurring to me that expelling pregnant students was anything wrong. I didn't know anything better, until I audited a graduate class, Disadvantaged Youth in Career Technical Education, which was taught by Drs. Davison Mupinga and David Browne. Aside from the students who had had breaks on education and were back to study this course, I learned about a school Dr. Browne worked with, that accommodated pregnant students. It suddenly occurred to me what a treasure we were throwing away by expelling our girls when pregnant.



When, in 2019, I enrolled for the International Master's Program in Educational Research at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, I was determined to investigate and act upon this contravention of the principles we, teachers, should be aspiring for and enabling for our students.

Several of my coursework papers and my ongoing thesis research focus on understanding the factors and actors at play in perpetuating this education rights violation, with the hope of devising sustainable ways of enabling girls to continue school during and after pregnancy. I am collecting the views of teachers, most of whom have expressed remorse for the expulsions they have carried out without reflecting on the implications for the career future of the girl child.'

Whenever I get an opportunity to speak at a public event, I drum the message to parents, teachers and policy makers to allow pregnant students to continue school. After my research, I am embarking on a journey to cause the promulgation of enabling national educational policies and allocation of resources needed for a good learning environment for pregnant students. It will be a long and hard journey, but I am resolute. ●



AN IDEA WAS BORN

By Willis Welvis Kitto,
Masak Secondary School, Uganda



On May 15, 2018 I had just completed a hectic and vigorous training through the ILEP Program hosted at Kent State University and had only one question in mind:

"What next?"

In Uganda, students are categorized following classroom performance and financial status of parents or guardians. Those students who come from financially well-off families attend high end schools and end up performing far better in national examinations than their counterparts from financially struggling families. This gives them a higher competitive advantage to go to the best universities and end up top on the job market. Meanwhile the financially disadvantaged students go to schools with minimal resources where they end up performing poorly and many even drop out of school on the way.

While still focussed on answering the question, I envisioned a school environment where I could find a permanent solution to the above challenges by being able to introduce policies, make decisions on classroom management and plan the whole process of curriculum delivery. I had an idea of making the school environment enjoyable and a better place to all stakeholders by providing equal opportunities to all students. I could only implement all these if I was a headteacher of a secondary school. *(continued page 6)*

As a way of moving forward, I engaged a friend and former classmate during my MBA course. She was serving as a Town Clerk in Town Council that records a very high number of school dropouts due to both social and economic problems. She invited me to address the Town Council and sell my idea to these community leaders. I convinced the council, and they gave out 10 acres of land for a community secondary school to be established.

I mobilized volunteer essential staff and the political leadership in the area, a two classroom with office school block was constructed. On February 4, 2019, our school opened with 16 students to start the academic year. Through our determination, hard work and lobbying, the government decided to partner with us to provide funds for the construction of three classroom blocks, administration block, multipurpose hall, ICT and library block together with three staff



housing units. By June 2019, we were in our second term of study with a student population of over 200 and the government, through the Ministry of Education and Sports, started the construction works.

We opened our second year of operation on February 3, 2020 with over 320 students which created a challenge of having classroom space for all. As we were struggling to accommodate and effectively teach them, the COVID-19 pandemic was here, and the President of Uganda ordered the closing of all schools on March 19, 2020.

It is very unfortunate and sad that we could not find capacity to continue teaching online like some of the schools within the country. This meant that all our students have been out of school for the past 11 months. Some of our girls have been married off and many young boys have been forced to drop school and become casual laborers.

However, we have managed to move on swiftly with the construction and as the government plans to reopen schools on March 1, 2021, we shall have enough classroom space to accommodate up to 1000 students. As we open again, we might not have all we need to run this school smoothly but I am happy that the idea was born and we are able to help many children in our township to have the education they deserve. ●

SPRING CIIE EVENTS



UNTRANSLATABLE

CIIE, in collaboration with Wick Poetry Center, hosted poetry workshops and an open mic for International Mother Tongue day in February this year. CIIE also unveiled an innovative website where anyone can go online to view and upload their own poetry.

CIIE, in collaboration with the School of Peace and Conflict Studies and the Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality, hosted a full-day of events in honor of International Women's Day. The day began with a panel discussion by international women educators taking on the challenge of COVID. Other events that day included a viewing of the documentary "Wave Goodbye to Dinosaurs" with a Q&A with the filmmaker and a talk with Cynthia Enroe, a well-known scholar in gender and militarism.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EVENTS



RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

This semester's research spotlight featured our Aggarwal-Blackburn Visiting Scholar, Dr. Busra Basak Ozyurt Soyuturk on her research in developing a Smartphone Addiction Scale for Children. This research was accepted to be presented at American Educational Research Association Conference in 2021.

DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES

KENT STATE
UNIVERSITY

Gerald H. Read Center
for International and
Intercultural Education

Gerardo B L A N C O



Join us in The Faces of International Education: Racial Justice, Collective Memory and Visual Culture. We will discuss the use of visual culture as a conceptual tool to analyze international education in relation to racial justice. This lecture will focus on professional collective memory and dialogue to re-imagine the future of the field.

RSVP for this virtual Zoom event

Wednesday, April 21st, 2021 at 12pm