

Preface

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First, our continues pray is directed for victims of flood in Sumatra, Indonesia. Indonesia is in the mourning due to the recent flood in November 2025 in many areas in Sumatra (Aceh, North Sumatra, and West Sumatra provinces), causing many people to lose their houses, belongings and even many lives. We pray for the victims in order they can be recovered soon, either by Indonesian government, the companies which have deforested large areas of Sumatra or ourselves who can contribute financially through organized donation. We hope that this disaster can become a warning and lesson learned about the danger of deforestation to prevent further disaster in some other areas of Indonesia. There are advantages of having wood from the forest and from the mining. However, the danger of deforestation to take these advantages is greater and therefore, it is recommended to leave the forests as they are to protect many lives!

I unusually start this Preface by mentioning the above disaster. I do not mention the disaster as “natural” disaster because I believe this disaster was caused by the greediness of some companies (with or without the government’s consent) to exploit Indonesian nature by disregarding the danger they can cause for the mass. One of the purposes of mentioning the above disaster is to show that this journal is contextual. I mean the topics of the articles published in this journal are portraying some of the realities in our daily life.



For example, the article “Designing assessment for inclusion: How does culture fit in?” by Joanna Hong-Meng Tai from Deakin University shows that students are diverse such as in terms of their cultural background and physical abilities. Therefore, teachers need to design their assessment methods to cater this diversity (inclusive assessment) in order assessment can measure their learning outcomes.

Another example that the topic of this journal is contextual can be seen in the article “Role of Head Teachers in Sustaining Academic Continuity Amidst Smog in South Punjab, Pakistan” written by Khizer Hayat, one of our students at the Faculty of Education (FoE) who comes from Pakistan. In this article, he explains about how smog affected the process of teaching and learning in Punjab, Pakistan. This smog was caused by industrial emissions, crop residue bunnings and other air pollutant and affected negatively on many people respiratory health. This article only focuses on how school leaders responded to smog to ensure the teaching and learning process can be run, such as by replacing offline into online teaching and by using of teaching technology. If I were the writer, I will not only focus my writing on how to respond to smog, as if it is something that we can take for granted as the fifth session of Punjab from October to January, but also to inform policy makers or government, to do something to stop the smog such as by instructing the industries to relocate themselves to areas far away from schools and dense population; and by prohibiting farmers from burning agricultural residue. This preventive measure will be more beneficial for larger population to avoid discomfort of having air pollution.

William J Fulbright believed education is a slow but powerful force. Similar belief is shared by Suliyana and Insof Waeji who writes their article under the title “Education as a Catalyst: School-Based Strategies to Prevent Child Marriage in Lombok, Indonesia”. This means when a girl can be facilitated to access education, she can be prevented from being married at an early age. However, poverty and *merarik* tradition in Lombok, unfortunately can take a way girls’ rights in accessing education.

Therefore, Indonesian government should be proactive to work together with the local government in eradicating poverty or providing scholarships for rural children to access their education and eradicate harmful tradition such as *merarik*.

In addition, it is important for Indonesian government to work hand in hand with and to support education CSOs such as Suryanara Foundation which has supported tertiary enrolment in Indonesia as described by Lavinia DW Araminta and Wimba W Dinutanayo in their article “Examining the Roles of Education Civil Society Organizations in Supporting Tertiary Enrolment in Indonesia: A Case Study of the Suryanara Foundation”. Both of the writers work in Suryanara Foundation and the content of the article persuades the government not to regard education CSO as its opponent but supporter by highlighting the Foundation contribution in supporting tertiary enrolment in Indonesia.

One of the expected outcomes of publication is to inform policy makers on what to do next based on the research finding. The research by M. Arif Rahman Hakim, one of the previous FoE’s Scholars in Residence who then becomes a research fellow at BuckLER Center, Ohio State University, under the title “EFL Teachers’ Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) Competence in Indonesian Madrasahs: A Post-Pandemic Analysis” finds that teachers at the *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* (MI) and *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (MT) levels generally exhibit limited integration of technology in teaching. In contrast, teachers at *Madrasah Aliyah* (MA) shows higher TPACK competence. Based on this finding, Hakim recommends policy makers and educators to provide institutional support, teacher training and resource availability in helping teachers’ to use technology in their teaching process especially teachers at MI and MT levels (year 1 to 9).

Similarly, the research by Darihan Mubarak on “The Contributing Dimensions and Elements of *Maqasid Sharia* to the Well-Being in *Pesantren*” can become the basis for policy makers and educators in

improving the well-being in the pesantren based on the dimensions and elements of *maqasid sharia*. *Maqasid sharia* (the objectives of sharia) was the theory which was firstly formulated by the late Imam Abu Ishaq al-Syatibi (d.790 H/1388 AD). Based on his reading of the Qur'an, al-Syatibi categorized the objectives of sharia into five (dimensions): safeguarding religion (*Hifzu al-Din*), safeguarding life (*Hifzu al-Nafs*), safeguarding intellect (*Hifzu al-'Aql*), safeguarding posterity (*Hifzu al -Nasl*), and safeguarding wealth (*Hifzu al-Mal*). The more recent scholar, Jasser Auda (B. 1966), added safeguarding honor (*Hifzu al-'Ird*) as the sixth dimension of *maqasid sharia*. In this article, Mubarak seems to refer to the more recent scholar's six dimensions of *maqasid sharia* but without trace of referring to any of these two scholars.

On the whole, the articles in this volume depict how education research, when grounded in lived realities and ethical responsibility, has the potential to inform more inclusive, sustainable, and policy-relevant responses to present-time social and environmental challenges.

Happy New Year, and let's face 2026 with optimism and carefulness in conserving our earth to prevent disaster and for our own comfort as well as the next generation to come!