

Issue 1.

RAVE News



<http://www.ballarat.edu.au/schools/education-and-arts/research/rave-researching-adult-and-vocational-education>

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Welcome

Professor Erica Smith, RAVE Acting Convenor

RAVE has been an active research group at the University of Ballarat for several years. This year we gained a small internal grant, enabling us to become more professional in the management of our affairs. Hence we are now able to produce a newsletter, which will be sent out twice a year. We have been able to improve our web site and we now have our own email address: rave.research@ballarat.edu.au Barry Golding is the convenor and is on Long Service Leave.

We are currently in challenging times in VET and adult education, and now more than ever it is important to have good research evidence to make available to policy-makers and to practitioners. As a major grant-winning and publishing unit, RAVE shares its research work with others through this newsletter. We very much value our communities and every member in different ways engages very closely with relevant communities at local, national and international level.

The RAVE research team consists of six members: Barry Golding, Erica Smith, Annette Foley, Steven Hodge, Lawrie Angus and Adele Echter-Baltrunas, with support staff Morgan Wise. We also have a number of PhD students reaching in VET, all of whom are active practitioners.

RAVE news will keep you up to take with our activities and events, and each issue will also present a brief overview of findings from one important research project undertaken by a RAVE member. If you know of anyone else who might be interested in receiving this newsletter please let us know at rave.research@ballarat.edu.au

RAVE OctoberVET 2013: 18th October 12.00-4.00pm

We would like to give advance notice of this year's OctoberVET event, on Friday 18th October. The event will be held at the SMB campus at Lydiard St, Ballarat, and is called *The variety of VET: Research into policy and practice for schools, training providers and workplaces*.

OctoberVET is the name given to a series of a dozen or so events on VET research around Australia at this time of year. It's part of the activities of the Australian Vocational

Education and Training Research Association. This is Ballarat's sixth OctoberVET event.

Our keynote speaker is Dr Sinan Gemici from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER). Sinan will be reporting on NCVER analysis of the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth, a rich source of information about Australia's young people and their transitions from school. He will be discussing the educational and occupational aspirations of young people and on factors affecting their post-school pathways. Sinan's work has been delivered to packed audiences around Australia this year, so now it is your chance to access the presentation locally. Also, RAVE researchers will be reporting on two recent RAVE projects: the Indian apprenticeship project, reported below, and a national project on learning & development practitioners.

Lunch will be provided at the start of the event, and we hope to see you there. Please email rave.research@ballarat.edu.au to register your intention to attend

National research success for RAVE

In conjunction with Quantum Consulting from WA, RAVE was successful in its bid to be a part of the panel for research for the Australian Workforce Productivity Agency (AWPA), and for the Research and Evaluation Panel for the Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations.

Recognition and funding for RAVE

RAVE has been recognised as a designated research group in the School of Education and Arts, receiving a small grant for 2013 to provide support for research development and publication activities.

International apprenticeship conference comes to Ballarat

The next conference of INAP (the International Network on Innovative Apprenticeship) will be held in Ballarat in September 2015. This conference is held every two years and attracts academics, practitioners and policy-makers. Previous conferences have been held in Bremen, Vienna, Turin, Beijing and Johannesburg. The network began in 2006 in Bremen, Germany, and has grown rapidly. Erica Smith of RAVE will be the conference convenor. Contact Erica for details on e.smith@ballarat.edu.au or see the INAP web site at <http://www.inap.uni-bremen.de/>

VET PhD group at the University of Ballarat

RAVE members are currently supervising a group of PhD students enrolled under UB's 'special cohort' provisions. These students, known as the 'VET PhD Masterclass', are senior managers in the VET sector from four Australian States and Territories, undertaking their PhDs part-time. A structured workshop series in 2012 and early 2013 provided the group with access to senior national figures in VET and in research methods. Anyone interested in a 2014 intake should contact Erica Smith on e.smith@ballarat.edu.au or 03-5327 9665. RAVE members also supervise individual students in PhDs and Masters by Research.

A recent RAVE project: Possible futures for the Indian apprenticeships system

Erica Smith (University of Ballarat: RAVE) and Ros Brennan Kemmis (Charles Sturt University: RIPPLE).

The research reported on here was a project funded by the International Labor Organization and the World Bank in India to compare and contrast apprenticeship systems in 11 countries, for the purpose of drawing out some principles of good practice. The project was undertaken to provide suggestions for the process of reform and expansion of the Indian apprenticeship system. Whilst it is acknowledged that apprenticeship systems cannot be transplanted among countries, we believe it is possible to identify the key features of countries' systems which can be sensitively developed in other countries.

India's apprenticeship system will be a major contributor to its future growth but in comparison to, for example, Australia or Germany, its apprenticeship system is small [Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2011], with only about 0.1% of the formal labour force involved in apprenticeships compared with up to 4% in some countries. The Indian labour force is the world's second largest [Economist, 2011] with 487.6 million workers and the country is aiming at developing 500 million skilled workers within the next ten years

Some of the obvious challenges that confront the Indian government in its attempts to reform the apprenticeship system include the small size of the apprenticeship system, lack of alignment of expectations of employers and apprentices, uneven quality of curriculum, uneven participation in the apprenticeship system among socio-economic groups and other groupings, lack of confidence in the skills of graduates of the system and the difficulties associated with a predominantly informal economy [Planning Commission Sub Committee 2009]. There is also concern about an over-complexity of regulation, the under-representation of women and minority groups in apprenticeships, and the availability and quality of sufficient trainers [ILO and OECD 2011]. Under these conditions international good practice principles derived from this research are highly relevant.

A number of international country case studies were written specifically for the project, which were then analysed by the

authors. The aim of the cross-case analysis was to develop good practice principles and features of a 'model apprenticeship system' which were then utilised, following an analysis of the Indian system, to suggest possible options for the Indian system. The country case studies were written by a team of international country experts. The experts were asked to validate their case studies with at least one academic from another institution and at least one senior government official. In their case studies they were asked to identify policy developments in their countries that they considered to be helpful and those considered to be unhelpful; and to list current issues.

From the country data, underlying good practice principles were drawn out, grouped into four categories: occupational coverage, participation, national government structures and stakeholders. The principles are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Underlying Principles for a Model Apprenticeship System

Occupational coverage

- Apprenticeships available in all industries;
- Apprenticeships available in a range of occupations, particularly those that are typically undertaken by women as well as men.

Participation

- Apprenticeships open to people of either gender and all ages;
- Apprenticeships available in rural and regional as well as urban areas;
- Clear pathways for school-leavers;
- Pathways for disadvantaged people and for people without necessary entry qualifications;
- Availability of off-the-job programs to facilitate entry to an apprenticeship ;
- Pathways into apprenticeship (and beyond) are clear and well-publicised in ways that reach all potential candidates.

National government structures

- National policy emphasis is both on training aspects and on employment aspects of apprenticeship;
- Good liaison between government agencies responsible for different aspects of the apprenticeship system;
- Where responsibilities lie with states and provinces as well as national governments, the relative responsibilities are well-defined and publicised;
- Rigorous qualifications that are regularly updated;
- Collection of appropriate data about apprenticeships;
- Systems make provision for apprenticeships in different geographical areas (eg rural as well as urban).

Stakeholders

- All major stakeholder groups (employers, training providers, employer groups and employee associations/trade unions are involved in the development and maintenance of apprenticeship regulation and structures;
- A commitment to collaboration among the various stakeholders;
- System for adding new occupations to the apprenticeship system according to specified criteria, with specific stakeholder bodies having responsibilities to notify new occupations.

A concern for quality: When we analysed the country case studies we found that good practice principles needed to have an underpinning concern for quality. In some cases, where apprenticeship systems were in their infancy or were historically very small, quality was not a primary consideration, but the need for quality was generally emphasised. Apprenticeship systems involve many components: employment, training in the workplace, training at training providers, and administrative systems at different levels of government. To address these issues and to suggest strategies that increased and assured quality, several points were suggested in relation to employers and to training providers, which had been utilised in one or more of the countries studied.

Outcomes: The findings from this research project have global applicability since the principles that were derived from the analysis can be used to benchmark current systems and further provide directions and strategies for improvement. The project provides a transferable framework for examining apprenticeship systems. In particular it provides a focus on training which is (oddly) often neglected. The framework pays particular attention to expansion strategies and risks.

An Options Paper for India was developed that mapped the good practice principles against the identified weaknesses of the Indian system. The findings were presented at a workshop of 80 senior stakeholders in New Delhi in September 2012. A small high-level working party was established by the Directorate General Employment and Training, Ministry of Labour and Employment, based on the options paper. The World Bank is working on pilot projects in India during 2013, based on the suggestions. Further afield, parts of the report were used by the ILO's Geneva office to feed into the G20 meeting on youth unemployment in September 2012. Erica Smith was also invited, as a result of the project, to a high-level workshop at CEDEFOP in Thessaloniki in Greece in May 2013 to discuss research and policy advice on apprenticeship to the European commission. Apprenticeship is often seen as an antidote to youth unemployment levels in the EU. In addition, Erica was invited to present the findings of the project at the English National Apprenticeship Service's international seminar in March 2013.

<http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Awards/Apprenticeship-Week-2013/InternationalSeminar2013.aspx>

Interest has also been expressed from non-government organisations (NGOs) in Asian countries. It is clear that there is a great thirst for research in this area. One issue that emerged when the findings were presented at the INAP international apprenticeship conference recently, in South Africa, was the need for further research on informal apprenticeships and how far they ought to be, and could be, integrated into formal systems.

The two reports from the research will soon be published on-line by the ILO, but meantime you can email Erica for copies, at e.smith@ballarat.edu.au

(This article is adapted from an article in 'Research Today', the newsletter for AVETRA members)

RAVE members' research achievements June 2012 – April 30th 2013

New research grants received

- Gale, T., **Hodge, S.**, Charlton, E., Rodd, P., Parker, S., Skourdombis, A. & Rawolle, S. (2013) *Impact for disadvantaged learners of TAFE institutions and other VET providers delivering bachelor and associate degree qualifications*. Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIISRTE) and the National VET Equity Advisory Council (NVEAC).
- Smith, E.**, Smith, A. & Walker, A. (2012). *How do qualifications delivered by enterprises contribute to improved skill levels and other benefits for companies, workers and the nation?* ARC Linkage grant.
- Smith, E.**, Brennan, Kemmis, R. and a team of international researchers. (2012). *Possible futures for the Indian apprenticeships system*. International Labour Organisation and World Bank.

Peer-reviewed journal papers

- Smith, E.** & Patton, W. (2013): Part-time working by students: is it a policy issue, and for whom? *Journal of Education and Work*, 26(1), 48-76.
- Hodge, S.** & Harris, R. (2012). Discipline, governmentality and 25 years of competency-based training. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 44(2), 155-170.
- Smith, E.** (2012). Getting in through the front door: The first hurdle of researching in companies. *International Journal of Training Research*, 10(3), 153-163.
- Smith, E.** & Clayton, B. (2012). How VET researchers use theory in their research. *International Journal of Training Research*, 10(3), 251-258.
- Mark, R. & **Golding, B.** (2012). 'Fostering social policies that encourage engagement of older men in their own learning: Challenges for improving the health and wellbeing of men in the third age', *International Journal of Education and Ageing*, 2(3), 221-236.

Professional journal papers

- Hodge, S.** (2013). A model of learning and development practice. *Training & Development*, 40(2), 4-6.
- Golding, B.** (2012). Lifelong and lifewide learning, *The Australian TAFE Teacher*, 46(3), 20-21.
- Angus, L.** (2012). Social emphasis missing in TAFE plan, *Campus Review*, 21 June.

Other reports etc.

- Golding, B.**, Lavender, P., **Angus, L.** & **Foley, A.** (2012) *Closing the loop: Listening and responding to learner voice in vocational education and training in Australia*, Report to National VET Equity Advisory Council (NVEAC), University of Ballarat, Ballarat.
- Hodge, S.**, **Smith, E.** & Barratt-Pugh, L. (2013). *Modelling learning and development industry practitioner needs: Research report*. Sydney: Australian Institute of Training and Development.

Seddon, T., Bennett, D., Bobis, J., Bennett, S., Harrison, N., Shore, S., **Smith, E.** & Chan, P. (2012) *Living in a 2.2 world: ERA, capacity building and the topography of Australian educational research*, AARE-ACDE joint report.

<http://www1.aare.edu.au/pages/images/AARE%20ACDE%20Report%20Final.pdf>

Refereed conference papers

Smith, E. & Brennan Kemmis. (2013). Globalising the apprenticeship concept: How far can apprenticeship systems be compared across countries and what can be gained? *Apprenticeship in a Globalised World: Premises, Promises and Pitfalls: INAP (Network on Innovative Apprenticeship) Conference* University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, April 23-24.

Smith, E. & Brennan Kemmis, R. (2012). Good practice in apprenticeship systems: Evidence from an international study. Collaboration in Technical and Vocational Education & Training: *Second UPI International Conference on Technical and Vocational Education & Training*. Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, 4-5 December. Selected for plenary presentation.

Other conferences, public addresses etc

Hodge, S. (2013). Modelling L&D practitioner work. *Australian Institute of Training & Development (AITD) National Conference*, Melbourne, 10-11 April.

Hodge, S. (2013). Standards and diversity, or What trainers do with competencies. *Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association (AVETRA) 16th Annual Conference*, VET Research at the Edge: Training for Diversity and Change, Fremantle, 4-5 April.

Smith, E. (2013). Why developing countries are focusing on apprenticeship: India's search for international inspiration. *How Apprenticeships support and strengthen economic growth. National Apprenticeship Service 4th International Apprenticeship Conference*, 14th March, London. (Invited keynote presentation)
www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Awards/Apprenticeship-Week-2013/InternationalSeminar2013.aspx

Hodge, S., Gale, T. & Rawolle, S. (2012). Playing the field: Imagining the TAFE degree as a new point of distinction. *Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) Annual Conference*, University of Sydney, 2-6 December.

Hodge, S. (2012). NCVET Research Forum: *Structures in the tertiary education and training system*. Melbourne, 8 November.

Angus, L., **Golding, B.**, **Foley, A.** & Lavender, P. (2012) 'Learner voice': Who speaks? Who listens?' Paper to European Conference on Education Research, Cadiz, Spain, 17-21 Sept.

Smith, E. (2012). How VET revalues or devalues occupations. *OctoberVET 2012*, University of Ballarat, 19 October.

Foley, A. (2012) 'Relationships, Community and Choices: Creating Spaces for Capabilities.' Keynote Address: The Youth Partnerships Alternative Education Forum, Ballarat, 30 Nov.

Golding, B., Lavender, P., **Angus, L.** & **Foley, A.** (2012) *Closing the loop: Listening and responding to learner voice in vocational education and training in Australia*, Report to National VET Equity Advisory Council (NVEAC), University of Ballarat.

Golding, B. (2012) Australian Men's Sheds Association (AMSA) submission, *Grundtvig Award 2012, Innovative approaches to adult education and learning: Key competencies for social inclusion*, European Association for the Education of Adults, August, pp.51-53.

Awards and other recognition

Steven Hodge Co-winner of the AVETRA *Journal Article of the Year Award* for 2012, with Professor Roger Harris.

Barry Golding Member of steering committee 2013 for Australian men's sheds research through *beyondblue*.

Barry Golding Facilitation of Indigenous Men's Shed Forum, Parliament House, Canberra, 15-16 August 2012

Barry Golding Presentations in Men's learning and wellbeing research forums and book launch in Christchurch, New Zealand, 4-5 Sep. 2012

Barry Golding Keynote speaker, WA Men's Shed Conference, 2-4 Oct 2012

Barry Golding Keynote speaker, Eastern Suburbs Disability Network Conference, Mooroolbark, 29 Nov 2012

Barry Golding. (2012). ALA Representative for Australia at Asia South Pacific Basic Adult Education Forum, Cambodia, 21-25 Sep 2012

Erica Smith & Annette Foley are members of the AVETRA Experienced Researcher Group and presented at a research forum of 40 government staff at DIISRTE in Canberra in November 2012.

Erica Smith reconfirmed as co-chair of Network on Innovative Apprenticeship (INAP) for 2013-2015.

Erica Smith reviewed research grant applications for Australian, Qatari and Dutch government research schemes during early 2013.

To be put on the RAVE mailing list, email rave.research@ballarat.edu.au or write to
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