

**INTO THE UNKNOWN – RISK TAKING IN INTERCULTURAL
EXPERIENCES TO DEVELOP RESILIENCE WITH SOCIALLY AND
CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE TEACHERS**

Associate Professor Maxine Cooper ^a, Dr Carolyn Johnstone ^b
^{ab} Federation University Australia, Australia
Corresponding email: m.cooper@federation.edu.au

Abstract

Practising and pre-service teachers studying education programs at open access regional universities in Australia often have limited opportunities to develop global mindedness, so completing a professional experience placement in a culturally unfamiliar setting is perceived as a risk-laden activity. Drawing on Bourdieu's work on cultural capital, habitus and reflexivity, Biesta's idea of 'the beautiful risk of education' and Beck's writing on risk and globalisation, this qualitative research explores the role of risk in a pre-service teachers' journeys towards becoming resilient, socially and culturally inclusive teachers.

This paper reports on the experiences of students who have travelled from Federation University Australia and taken the risk of completing professional experience placements in Asia-Pacific countries, specifically Nepal, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste. Risks – both real and perceived – are important in developing a 'reflexive habitus' as part of the identity of the beginning teacher. The risk involved in moving between habitus, organizational approaches to assessing, managing and taking risk in pre-service teachers' intercultural experiences and the pedagogy around risk are considered.

Initial findings suggest that the level of risk of the activity is central to the ways the teachers develop, not only their professional identity, but also their cultural empathy, resilience and confidence to teach in a global context.

Keywords: Intercultural Experience; Pre-service Teacher; Risk; Teacher Education.
