

REFLECTING

on the past six years of the *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*: 2008 to 2013 and beyond

Thinking back to 2008 brings us to a different early childhood world—one before all the changes associated with the National Quality Agenda.

In 2008, AJEC was the *Australian Journal of Early Childhood*—seven to eight articles were published each issue and all in hard copy. Coming forward to 2013 we are the *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*. We publish 12 to 16 articles per issue, and five to eight of these are online only.

One of the reasons for the name change was to try and open the journal to a wider Australasian audience. I'm not sure that we succeeded in this—in 2008, 76.6 per cent (23/30) of articles published had an Australian-based author as the first named author. In 2013, 75.4 per cent (43/58) were from Australian-based first authors. What we have seen in these six years though is an increase in articles from Asian authors (3.3 per cent to 10.5 per cent—thanks so much to our colleagues in Asia who are encouraging Asian researchers to send their work to us) and more articles addressing issues of literacy, numeracy, health, and early childhood history (the latter due to a special edition which focused on the development of early childhood in Australia since the introduction of the *Child Care Act [1972]*). In 2008, we had a strong focus on music (5/30 articles—16.6 per cent—compared to 3/58—5.3 per cent in 2013). The policy changes we have seen since 2008 have led to an increase in research on issues such as early childhood leadership, pedagogy, assessment, policy analysis, professional development/professional learning and children's voice.

What has really changed for researchers in the past six years is the way they go about doing their research. We have seen a decrease in positivist research

(6/30—20 per cent in 2008, compared with 6/58—10.3 per cent in 2013). What has replaced this is a range of different qualitative approaches. Six articles in 2013 used case studies, utilising a range of data-gathering techniques including interviews, observations, journaling, focus groups, recordings—visual or audio—documents, and assessments. Mosaic research was used three times in 2013—this is an approach that works to forefront children's voice through a combination of strategies including drawings, paintings, scribble writing, notes, recordings, observations, book making, tours, map making, child interviews, role play, photography and other IT methods, music, dance, song and storytelling. Evaluations remain a popular research topic and these are undertaken using combinations of interviews, focus groups, observations, pre- and post-intervention testing, questionnaires, document analysis, meetings, videos, photography, drawings and portfolios. Action research is also used as an evaluation tool.

Where is AJEC going in the next six years? The benefits of open access journals are significant—freely available articles are read by more people and cited more often (which benefits the authors significantly). AJEC articles that are two years and older will become available for free on the Early Childhood Australia website in the coming months. While it is not currently feasible to be completely open access, soon there will be an option for authors to opt for the open access avenue for a fee.

Thank you to all of the dedicated AJEC subscribers who have supported our journal over the past six years, we look forward to your continued support and we are excited to share new developments with you in the near future.

Professor Margaret Sims
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and Editor of AJEC

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