

Conference Report

Imtiaz Ali Bughio

First of all, I am grateful to the Teacher Registration Board, South Australia for the sponsorship to attend HASS SA Conference held at UniSA Magill Campus on 25th and 26th February 2017. The conference was a great source of inspiration for me as a newly registered teacher and a temporary relief teacher. All the sessions were so well thought and well named that it was hard to choose one of them to attend. I definitely felt like attending all of them, but it was certainly not possible. In addition to the topics for the sessions, the profiles of keynote speakers and presenters were also well-documented. Almost all of them were experts in their respective areas of studies. Overall, the decorum and ambience of the conference added more attraction to the learning-filled environment.

The first keynote presentation by Malcolm McInerney on 'The Place of HASS in curriculum, time and to argue our case' on Saturday 25th February 2017 was a great learning experience. Mr McInerney is widely known and highly respected person who has taught humanity subjects in South Australian education system for about 40 years. Presently is working as a Teaching Academic at the University of South Australia. In this presentation, he mentioned a number useful techniques and resources to teach Humanities and Social Sciences. He advocated the place of HASS in the curriculum efficiently. He opined that HASS subject could increase the ability of students to think creatively and critically. Moreover, he highlighted the importance of soft skills in our life. He added that a research conducted by Harvard University concluded that 85% of job success comes from having well-developed soft skills and people skills, whereas only 15% of them come from technical skills and knowledge. He also reworded the acronym STEM that stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths by adding Humanities, and he phrased it as THEAMS. Overall, his focused and interesting keynote presentation gave a wonderful start to the conference. This, I believe, one of the most significant elements of success for the HASS conference.

After this session, I had already selected a couple of 'Workshop A' series that I wanted to attend. Unfortunately, I could attend only one of the workshops from each series. Looking at my recent experience in teaching in Australia, I opted for the workshop titled 'History Teaching for Early Career Teachers'. The workshop was conducted by Kirsty Raymond who an important

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member of History Teacher Association of South Australia (HTASA), and presently working at The Pulteney Grammar School. Her workshop was mainly a reflection of her personal teaching and learning experiences. She very categorically highlighted the dos and don'ts for the participants/early career teachers to work as History teachers or to apply for jobs as teachers. Her presentation was very useful for me as a new teacher and I understood very well as to what I am expected to do when I apply for a job as a teacher or teach History in my class.

In the second series of workshop, I chose to attend 'How schools can be involved in working with refugee communities'. This was more like a panel discussion. It introduced Ruth Harbinson and refugees from *Welcome to Australia*. The participants mainly shared their personal experiences as refugees and helping people with the similar backgrounds. The stories of the panel were inspiring as well as encouraging. They shared how the school communities can work with the organisation working with refugees and the refugee students to make them feel inclusive. They also mentioned the names of organisations working for the same cause in South Australian in general, Adelaide in particular. It was an excellent experience of learning about diversity and inclusive approach in education.

The third and last series of the workshops also included some very important topics. The one that motivated me to attend was 'Stolen Generations'. This session was conducted by Christine Reid, an educational consultant. As an overseas trained teacher and a new migrant, I was lucky to attend this session about the history of Australian. This workshop helped me understand the meaning and concept behind Stolen Generations of Aboriginal children. I also knew the reasons behind stealing generations and how it all happened. I also understood the effects of Stolen Generations on the life of Aboriginal people. This encouraged me read more about it and know more about it from the people who have been working for these generations and the ones who have been affected by this.

Once again, I am grateful to the Teacher Registration Board for providing me this opportunity to not only learn about HASS, but also meet my community of practice. I met many new people and networked with them for future help and guidance.

Thanks and regards