

Voice Inclusive Practice, Digital Literacy and Children's Participatory Rights

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This paper posits the need to align child participation principles and the emerging field of digital pedagogies. Informed by a contextualisation of children's participatory rights in contemporary technologically enhanced classrooms, the challenges of facilitating Voice Inclusive Practices are explored. Education is experiencing unprecedented change, particularly in the area of digital pedagogies, student engagement and voice. Such developments necessitate a participatory, Voice Inclusive Practice model relevant to contemporary education contexts where digital pedagogies are engaged. The potential of digital spaces in education will only be fully realised when student perspectives are included in the planning and implementation of digital pedagogies. © 2017 John Wiley & Sons Ltd and National Children's Bureau

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Introduction

In the pursuit of modernised education, a significant increase in the technological and 'connected' classroom has emerged in recent years. However, the preparation and re-skilling of teachers to effect new practice has not kept pace with these educational advances (Hsu, 2011; Littlejohn and Hunter, 2016; Petko, 2012; Prestridge, 2012). In addition, consideration of the student's role in the implementation of these enhancements has also lagged some way behind (Orlando, 2009). Such failures to incorporate student participation actively in these new pedagogical processes may contribute to a generalised disconnect between students and adults where contrasting views of technology in education perpetuate (Livingstone and Sef-ton-Green, 2016; Stoilova and others, 2016). As Li (2007, in Kolikant, 2012, p. 908) notes '[t]he majority of students have found technology useful and effective in their learning. ... Their teachers, on the other hand, are far less enthusiastic'. Despite many students' communicated preferences for the use of technology in effectively assisting their learning, many teachers remain reluctant to utilise technologies to support student learning (Kolikant, 2012; Tondeur and others, 2016; Wang and others, 2014). However, the teacher's reluctance is not the only barrier to technological integration. Such pedagogical advances are also impacted by a range of factors outside of the educator's control.

The complexity associated with combining digital technologies and pedagogy is a challenge in itself (Loveless and others, 2003). Educational policies (Loveless, 2011), censorship, filtering and blocking (Brown, 2012; Gillett-Swan and Coppock, 2016), capabilities of the technologies (Gillett-Swan, 2017), access and cost (Bulman and Fairlie, 2016), effective training (Loveless, 2011) and pressures associated with an already over-crowded curriculum and modern teaching (Cochran-Smith and others, 2015; Sargeant, 2014b; Sargeant and Gillett-Swan, 2015) all represent significant hurdles to innovative practice.

These challenges associated with digital implementation and incorporation manifests as an apparent rejection of technology as an authentic pedagogical tool and stifles the establishment of modernised learning spaces (Livingstone, 2016; Tondeur and others, 2016). However,

overcoming these technological constraints does not ensure student engagement if the traditional pedagogy remains. While students are seemingly ready and able to embrace such technologies, teacher scepticism, ill-confidence, and pre-existing beliefs about pedagogy increases the risk of student disengagement (Howard and others, 2016). Kolikant (2012, p. 908) notes 'the introduction of ICT to schools does not by itself change its core agenda and practices'. Therefore, it is apparent that to effect such change, teachers, who are central to the solution, are in need of a pedagogical charter that guides practice and promotes improved learning experiences.

Student voice and children's participatory rights

A curriculum that equips students for the challenges of the modern world needs to ensure that students are supported to take increasing responsibility for their own learning, their physical, personal and social well-being, their relationships and their role in local and communities. As Freire (1998, p. 58) asserts, 'our relationship with learners demands that we respect them and demands equally that we be aware of the concrete conditions of their world, the conditions that shape them'. The notion of 'student voice' helps meet these objectives and ensures that the needs of students guide the design and delivery of learning activities. Student voice is focused predominantly on the design, facilitation and improvement of learning (Mitra, 2004).

Views about the place of young people in schools and society have changed over the past generation. Traditionally, the views and opinions of children were often discounted as having less legitimacy than the views of adults but as attitudes towards children and young people changed, different views have arisen associated with these changes. However, as Mitra (2007, p. 727) notes, '[i]n recent years, the term 'student voice' increasingly has been discussed in the school reform literature as a potential avenue for improving both student outcomes and school restructuring'.

The recognised value of student voice in education has increased in recent years due in part to a greater acknowledgement of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Lundy, 2007; Robinson and Taylor, 2013) and in response to emergent 'general principles such as empowerment and respect for young people, rather than specific models or theories' (Shier, 2001, p. 108). As such, providing opportunities for greater student input into pedagogical decision-making is now considered good practice (Brown, 2012; Lundy and Cook-Sather, 2015; Quinn and Owen, 2016).

Alongside this notion of student voice and more broadly, children's participatory rights, significant recent attention has focused on the opportunities and challenges of the increasingly digitalised world. Researchers and policy-makers alike are increasingly interested in the implications of digital technologies on the realisation and enactment of children's rights in practice (Byrne and others, 2016; Coppock and Gillett-Swan, 2016; Gillett-Swan and Coppock, 2016; Third and others, 2014). As Chan (cited in Third and others, 2014, p. 10) describes, '[d]igital media is a powerful way for children to realise their rights, from accessing information, playing games, to expressing themselves freely and even anonymously. Technology has a crucial role in empowering children by facilitating communication, education and activism'. However, such application remains teacher directed and inconsistent in application. The incorporation of student voice within the digitally enabled classroom realises the child's participatory rights, facilitates more active student engagement and supports effective teaching. But, the true extent of authentic implementation and incorporation of student voice is underrepresented in practice.

Enacting children's participation rights as relevant to education underpin what the authors identify as a philosophy of '*Voice Inclusive Practice*' (VIP) (Sargeant and Gillett-Swan, 2015).

VIP is represented by actions and processes that incorporate children's perspectives and actively engage with children on matters that affect them. VIP aligns with the participatory mandates of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations, 1989) in particular, Articles 12 and 13 and bears particular relevance to the child's education rights (Articles 23, 28, 29). VIP offers the freedom for children to express their viewpoint and participate at a level of their choosing through communication modes that are accessible and materially relevant to them. Supporting, where possible, full participation, the implementation of pedagogy from a VIP standpoint is inherently respectful and mindful of the child's perspective. VIP is recognisable by the presence of four core elements implemented and supported by the teacher; *achievability*, *authenticity*, *integral beyond convenience* and *respect* for the rights of all stakeholders. Originally considered in the context of traditional non-digital learning environments, the VIP framework if digitally enhanced, provides an opportunity for educators to facilitate learning experiences that embrace the student perspective.

Just as VIP (Sargeant and Gillett-Swan, 2015) provides opportunities for collaboration between teachers and students, the exponential increase in technological innovation and application in education, necessitates a framework for the inclusion of student voice that applies to digital pedagogies. There is therefore, opportunity for digital integration in education 'to realise innovative constructivist pedagogies ... promoting a student-centred, peer-learning approach, in which knowledge is created rather than transmitted' (Kolikant, 2012, p. 908). The fulfilment of such an opportunity requires an approach that includes the perspectives of *all* stakeholders, including students. It is now even more evident that not only do children's perspectives matter, but, as savvy digital consumers, they have much to offer in terms of their skills and knowledge to the contexts of technological pedagogies (Prensky, 2005).

With consideration of the changing nature of education and the increasing ubiquity of technologies in classrooms, the authors offer a transposition of VIP that is responsive to the emerging challenges and opportunities of digitally enabled education. The application of VIP (Digital) maintains the key philosophical foci of VIP but also responds to the burgeoning complexity of technology in education. Proliferating faster than in any other educational endeavour, the unique conditions that come with the rapidly evolving field of digital pedagogy necessitate a philosophical positioning to make sense of, evaluate and apply new methods and tools as they emerge. The following sections discuss the key emerging challenges of digital pedagogy alongside the opportunities and obligations to include children's voices in the development and provision of educational services. Such imperatives necessitate an operationalised VIP(Digital).

Changing educational landscapes

The integration of technology and the imperatives of connectivity in education have rapidly gained momentum in recent years with mixed success (Tondeur and others, 2016; Wang and others, 2014). Undeniably, in strikingly few years, children are now expected to regularly access online material and media at both school and at home. Paradoxically, at the same time, obstructive practices and policies are being employed to *protect* children by restricting open access to web based services in education settings (Livingstone and Sefton-Green, 2016). While government and industry initiatives advocate for technological pedagogies, the provision of the necessary infrastructure and training of teachers lags significantly behind the rhetoric. Despite these policy and provision inconsistencies, 'young people's lives are increasingly mediated by information and communication technologies — at home, at schools and in the community' (Livingstone and Bober, 2004, p. 9) and without any input from the children themselves.

In education, digital technologies are often integrated ad hoc based on the priorities and resources of various school, department, and government led initiatives. Policies are implemented in school environments variously — across year levels, between teachers, and subject areas, resulting in inconsistencies for student understanding and expectations of the use of digital technology in the school environment (Brown, 2012). Rarely, if ever, are students consulted during such policy development. However, as Cook-Sather (2002, p. 12) notes: ‘[s]tudents’ voices are important to all aspects of school education because of who they are, what they know and how they are positioned. Students must be recognised as having knowledge essential to the development of sound educational policies and practices’.

Alongside the already onerous tasks of modern teaching (Cochran-Smith and others, 2015; Sargeant, 2014; Sargeant and Gillett-Swan, 2015), filtering, blocking and censorship of digital content limits much of the potential that is enabled through the digital space. Although this may be warranted in some cases, the implications of a censorship agenda in the educational space are underexplored (Brown, 2012; Moyle and Owen, 2008). For example, when monitoring children’s online behaviour, such restrictive practices may diminish the opportunity for individualised instruction that embeds an authentic focus on student perspectives. While individualised learning experiences may be the ideal, in reality, contemporary educational learning spaces are less student-centred than teachers may expect. Kolikant (2012, p. 907) describes classroom learning as ‘typically teacher-centred, with the teacher doing most of the talking (typically in plenum), determining how time is used in the class, and relying on the curricular materials for information’. Even though the prospect of a digitally enabled classroom provides opportunities for deviation away from the more traditional teacher-centred pedagogical approaches (Kolikant, 2012; Kozma, 2003), pedagogies such as constructivist inquiry or discovery approaches while student *centred*, are not necessarily student *directed* unless intentionally enabled by educators. As such, the authority and direction of educational activity remains with the teacher and does not automatically facilitate or include children’s voice. Such a discrepancy between the perception and the reality in practice may be a further consequence of ill-defined guidance for educators in evaluating their student voice strategies particularly in the digital context. As Komulainen (2007, p. 13) notes ‘before we can simply “give a voice” to children, we need to acknowledge that there are ambiguities involved in human communication, and that these ambiguities result from the “socialness” of human interaction, discourses and practices’.

Despite the identified potential of an approach that actively seeks and incorporates student views and perspectives, the authentic and purposeful inclusion of students as collaborators to a digital pedagogy may yet be some way off, given that less than 40 per cent of teachers across Teaching and Learning International Survey countries report using ICT as a regular part of their teaching practice (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] 2015, p. 1). It is apparent that there remains a prevailing tradition of teachers assuming ‘(almost) exclusive authority regarding this required body of information in line with schooling’s information-focused agenda and teacher-centred practices’. Kolikant (2012, p. 907). While the provision of ICT related professional development may assist in addressing this issue, the OECD cautions that ‘technology alone will not enhance learning, but using it as part of good teaching practice can open new doors to learners and teachers’ (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2015, p. 4). Moreover, as Brown (2012, p. 126) notes, ‘being excluded from input into policy regulations is felt more acutely by students in the field of digital technologies, since it is a domain in which young people generally feel comfortable, in which they have a vested interest, and have considerable knowledge and skills’. The potential of digital application in education extends beyond the professional development of teachers and will only be

fully realised when the student perspective is included in the planning and implementation of a digital pedagogy.

Towards a Voice Inclusive Practice (Digital) approach

The preceding discussion has identified the necessary convergence of child participation and digital pedagogy and has highlighted the need for a framework to guide implementation. One model, Shier's (2001) Pathways to Participation, entails five steps of progression from *facilitating* to *incorporating* children's voices in community action and represents a useful starting point for operationalising a VIP philosophy (Sargeant and Gillett-Swan, 2015) in the digital context. While other theorists such as Hart (2008), Thomson and Holdsworth (2003), and Fielding (2011) offer effective guidance for identifying and evaluating the extent of student voice, only Shier (2001) offers a futures view of enablement. Nevertheless, all of the models can benefit from contemporised application that responds to the considerable changes in educational provision and pedagogy since conceptualisation.

The continuing level of disconnect between the academic, practitioner and community understandings on how to seek and implement children's perspectives in the evolving educational context is somewhat bridged by those adopting VIP (Sargeant and Gillett-Swan, 2015). VIP, defined as 'activities and practices that incorporate and actively engage with children and their perspectives on matters that affect them particularly as relevant for their education' (p. 181) enable children's voices to be sought *and* acted upon right from the planning stage, rather than as an addendum to existing practice. By extending VIP into the digital sphere, an opportunity is created for children's preferences to be further incorporated, recognised and implemented across their entire educational experience.

When actively involved in school processes, students report feelings of empowerment (Lundy, 2007; Robinson and Taylor, 2013) emphasising the benefits of inclusive approaches in enabling individualised education. The application of VIP (*Digital*) actualises children's participatory rights, extends their educational engagement, and supports the achievement of positive learning outcomes. Enabling a sharper connection between student voice, teacher practice, and digital integration encourages positive and focused learning experiences, fostering cultures of inclusivity benefitting both students and teachers in developing more responsive and relevant curriculum guided by students' expressed interests.

While some teachers, schools and policy makers acknowledge the benefit of the student perspective in contributing to curriculum development, a clear framework is needed to provide uniformity and validity to support wider implementation.

Therefore, three conceptualisations of participation underpin the development of VIP (*Digital*) and provide salient references from which implementation can be derived. The principles of VIP(*Digital*) are drawn (chronologically) from;

1. Participation mandates of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989),
2. Pathways to Participation (Shier, 2001)
3. Voice Inclusive Practice (Sargeant and Gillett-Swan, 2015).

For a more detailed discussion of the above, refer to the original papers as cited. A summary of the key principles of these informants to VIP(*Digital*) are presented in Figure 1.

Understanding Voice Inclusive Practice (Digital)

The concept of VIP (*Digital*) extends and contemporises the foundations offered by the UNCRC (1989), Shier (2001), and Sargeant and Gillett-Swan (2015). These principles (Figure 1), situate VIP (*Digital*) with the preceding exemplifications through an underpinning philosophy of child participation through voice *and* action. That is not to say that the

PARTICIPATION PRINCIPLES TO PRACTICE



Figure 1. Participation principles to practice.

foundations of VIP and other models are not relevant to the digital space, instead that they are reconceptualised within the context of a digital framing to provide a clearer framework to guide practice. When contrasted with the non-digitalised VIP, the key elements that constitute the VIP (Digital) framework support the VIP philosophy of accessibility, shared knowledge, experience and reciprocity (Mockler and Groundwater-Smith, 2015). These attributes that constitute a visible philosophy of VIP(Digital) are detailed in the following sections.

Voice Inclusive Practice (Digital) extends the substantive VIP framework and is characterised by five key attributes that together provide an enabling environment for contemporary learning and pedagogy development. Enabling environments embrace and utilise the

knowledge and skills of all members of the learning community. The task of operationalising VIP(Digital) resides with individual educators and institutions with consideration of the context, environment, resources and expertise of stakeholders (including children). However, in any context, the visibility of a VIP(Digital) philosophy should be apparent if each of the identified elements are considered from planning through to implementation. With a primary focus on shared learning, expertise and participation, the VIP (Digital) classroom will be identifiable as;

Accessible

The Accessibility principle of VIP (Digital) is centred on the provision and protection mandates of the UNCRC that support children's safe access to information and technologies. Considerations of cost (who pays?), access to content, access to technologies/devices/software/apps, etc. each represent material and ethical challenges to the fulfilment of an accessible Voice Inclusive Classroom. In the Australian context, accessibility considerations in educational environments are often summarily addressed through restrictive blocking and filtering processes (Brown, 2012) under the premise of protecting children. However, other countries such as those in Europe prefer an educative approach (Moyle, 2009) where 'emphasis is placed on educating students about responsible ethical practices with digital technologies and entrusting local authorities to oversee policy guidelines in this area, rather than attempting to control students' online behaviors through electronic means' (Brown, 2012, p. 119).

In contemporary education contexts, safeguarding children's online presence is paramount. Despite demonstrated improvements to children's safety and protection online through appropriate training, many children still lack skills in the critical evaluation of online content (Byrne and others, 2016). Noting that Livingstone and Bober (2004, p. 2) found that approximately 30 per cent of students reported not receiving any lessons on using the Internet and more than a decade later, Wang and others (2014) found little improvement in student's in-school application or use of digital technologies. Instead, schools often expediently restrict access in order to protect rather than equip students with the skills needed to navigate online safely. Such limited advancement in digital awareness education in schools has significant implications for children's ongoing well-being both at school and beyond. A digitally enabled VIP approach to pedagogy supports what Third and others (2014) identify as a need to balance the competing risks associated with children's digital engagement, with the opportunity and benefits of enabling children's capacity, agency and participation.

As with much education provision, enacting the principle of being 'Accessible' in a VIP (Digital) context rests with individual schools. Schools have the power to exercise varying levels of independence when it comes to the incorporation and use of technologies in the educational environment. While school-level policies and procedures are often guided by higher authorities, specificities around school implementation and what these policies resemble in practice can differ and contain some flexibility. As Brown (2012, p. 119) describes, these technological agreements, 'regularly contain language that represents a discourse of compliance and control rather than one of student empowerment and engagement'. Such practices are incompatible with a VIP(Digital) philosophy where access to the resources, tools and content for educational purposes is negotiated rather than imposed. In practice, accessibility criteria may involve children creating video projects as a learning activity option. Having the means and access to be able to do so, in turn builds their capabilities.

Shared media selection

The second aspect of VIP (Digital) pedagogy considers the digital decision-making relating to what technology, digital forms, apps, programs and similar will be accessible, used and

available for children (and teachers) within educational environments. When considered alongside children's participatory rights, the associated barriers to children's full participation are evident. Understanding different aspects of the student experience from the student perspective, particularly when considering digital technologies, 'enables an authentic dialogue to be fostered, which allows students to feel their views are respected and valued' (Brown, 2012, p. 123; Flutter and Rudduck, 2004). Such considerations include determining when and where technologies are used. For example, shared media selection could involve teachers presenting a learning task criteria, with children choosing the method/app to complete the task. This does not necessarily mean that the chosen tool needs to be digital or technologically based as both the VIP and VIP(Digital) philosophies are focused on seeking and considering student ideas and preferences — both respect and support children's participatory rights. While students themselves also acknowledge the complexities associated with the involvement of multiple stakeholders in technological decision-making at a school level, they 'nonetheless argued for the process to be conducted' (Brown, 2012, p. 126).

A key barrier to full participation for stakeholders' digital experiences, remains with the resource decision-making process. Decisions to restrict usage at a school or departmental level based on digital-phobia, economic limitations or an *ease of adult use* criteria, directly impact classroom learning opportunities, no matter how enthusiastic the teachers and/or students are.

On another level, issues arise when schools disallow the use of personal devices (BYOD) when adopting an *ease of adult use* criteria in decision-making. Sometimes, if staff or students do BYOD, network access may be restricted to maximise the 'protection' offered by the educational environment. Instead, only media identified, selected and deemed appropriate by decision-makers is accessible and able to be used. Such policies represent a significant limiting factor in the achievement of shared media selection.

Shared digital safety

The third element of VIP (Digital) considers in particular the protection mandates of the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989) including censorship, regulated blocking and filtering. Pedagogical decisions made by teachers restrict children's actual and inferred participation in education processes in the name of protection. The balance between 'protection for protection's sake' and protection from a genuine threat is an important consideration in a context where children sometimes worry about the internet (Gillett-Swan and Coppock, 2016). As such, a balanced approach to regulation is necessary so that children's exposure to harm is minimised without undermining their opportunities to participate, enjoy and express themselves fully. Focusing solely on either the dangers or the opportunities, without recognising the consequences of each approach is problematic for children's rights and safety (Livingstone and Bober, 2004; Third and others, 2014). There is a clear need for a balanced view of children's rights that both enables and protects.

Educational policies designed to protect children, typically exclude their perspectives (Brown, 2012; Moyle, 2009). The reality of who determines what technologies are available suggests that what is inappropriate or offensive in one context, may be educational and/or appropriate in another (Moyle, 2009). For example, students could be provided the freedom to listen to music while they are working if they are not disturbing the learning of others, and are able to maintain a level of attention to the learning tasks in doing so.

What VIP (Digital) promotes is a commitment by all to maintain safe practices when accessing material from social media, live web searches or other synchronous learning activities. Safe digital practices include assurances to maintain personal safety and respect the rights of other users by not engaging in unsafe interaction or bullying. These pro-social

digital practices are fundamentally linked to the principles within the VIP (Digital) in that all stakeholders will be equipped with the training, knowledge, and increased capacity to make informed decisions and assure the digital practices they engage with are practical, positive and considerate.

Shared digital literacy

Participation in a digitally enabled classroom presents an opportunity to overcome the apparent disconnect between digital educational practice and the participatory elements that *aren't* teacher directed. This forms a key aspect of the next element of the VIP (Digital) framework. The nature of pedagogical beliefs determines that active learning and ICT incorporation are more likely adopted by those aligning with constructivist philosophies than those whose beliefs do not reflect this orientation (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2015; Tondeur and others, 2016). The importance and benefits of a practical basis for learning is emphasised where students have a more active role in their own learning in line with constructivist and experiential approaches (Bruner, 1996; Dewey, 1938; Hmelo-Silver, 2004). Nevertheless, VIP (Digital) is not solely for the constructivist teacher. The benefits of integrating ICT into the classroom aid in developing a positive classroom climate through students' enjoyment when using technology, as well as through supporting student independent acquisition of knowledge that is less reliant on the teacher/direct teaching (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2015). Shared digital literacy enables an ongoing development of skills in critical engagement with online material, safe web searching and research skills which are useful, necessary and integral lifelong skills in an increasingly digital world. Within the digitally enabled classroom, all members of the learning community commit to maintaining a level of currency by trialling, sharing and analysing new and traditional technologies for their educational application prior to either acceptance or dismissal of the application. In practice, this could mean that multiple ways of achieving the learning task criteria are accepted, such as through video production, serialisation of screenshots, voiceover descriptions, live presentations, cartoon animation, each representing student preferences in terms of mode and medium for engagement. To this end there is a shared, collaborative and continual evaluation of tool suitability in terms of relevance, and pedagogical utility as both the content and the medium are evaluated and (re)negotiated over time.

Reciprocal knowledge and skill transmission

The final but *foundational* element of a VIP (Digital) classroom rests with the philosophy of shared knowledge — both prior and developing. Through this element, the relationship between teacher and student is one of collaboration rather than authority and the shared decision-making regarding the '*how's*' of education leads to a more satisfying and inclusive experience for all involved. While the '*what's*' and the '*why's*' of education remain the responsibility of curriculum authorities and teachers, the knowledge construction and application of *how* is where the shared experience of Voice Inclusive Pedagogy (Digital) has most value.

The benefits of this shared experience have been documented in the limited research conducted in this area (Brown, 2012; Kolikant, 2012; Levin and Arafeh, 2002; Moyle & Owen, 2008; Prensky, 2005) and has been identified as an area requiring further research to extend the knowledge-base (Brown, 2012; Moyle & Owen, 2008). Modern students seek authentic and active incorporation of both technology and their views and perspectives with expectations around significant school change to actively and authentically seek to incorporate these elements (Kolikant, 2012). A VIP (Digital) framework entails a collaborative philosophy

where all participants' level of skills and knowledge are shared where appropriate to support each participants' developing skills — particularly those who express the desire to utilise technology in their learning.

Conclusion

Voice Inclusive Practice (Digital) acknowledges both the challenges and opportunities of contemporary classrooms, particularly in terms of embracing and including student skills and perspectives in the learning process. Children represent a large, unique and underappreciated group of users of digital technologies. How they understand and use technologies reflect diverse and sometimes conflicting forms of meaning that are not understood by observation alone. Indeed, whether the child chooses to engage with digital technologies or not, further intensifies the complexity of navigating technological implementation. While students have varying preferences when it comes to utilising technologies, by constraining students' use of technology through policies and interpreted ethics linked to out-dated social exercises, we as educators, policy-makers, researchers and parents are ignoring the richness of the child's perspective. The potential for responsive, engaged, digitally inclusive education systems to enhance student engagement, empowerment, through VIP, *alongside* innovation will benefit all stakeholders, as education continues to evolve.

Statement of ethics

This work reported in this paper conceptual and theoretical and as such, ethical approvals were not required. No conflicts of interest apply to this work.

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