

**Project Summary for IAL Website**

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<b>Project Title:</b>	Leveraging leadership to sustain the dynamic professional development and identities of preschool teachers: The case for Knowledge Building Community (KBC)
<b>Project Number:</b>	GA17-01
<b>Year of Approval:</b>	2018
<b>Funding Source:</b>	WDARF
<b>Objectives and intended outcomes of the project:</b>	<p><b>Objectives:</b> The project aims to build the Knowledge Building Community (KBC) as a technology-mediated, emerging and self-sustaining network among a group of preschool teachers. The KBC fosters a knowledge creation culture that supports teachers’ professional practices and attends to their epistemic problems. Such community-based professional development develops leaderships and ownership of progression and practice among teachers, expert and novice. We also endeavour to transpose this model to student-teachers by scaling the KBC network in the form of design principles for other education courses.</p> <p><b>Intended Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The formation of KBC as a model of professional development to seed and diffuse teaching and learning innovations among pre-school teachers.</li> <li>• The development of toolkits that explain the structures, mechanisms, processes, and evidence-driven policies that can be adapted in other networks and kindergartens, allowing the spread of innovative practices.</li> <li>• The consolidation of a theoretical and practice framework on professional development for sustainable learning networks for innovative practices.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Team</b>	
<b>Principal Investigator:</b>	Professor David Hung Wei Loong
<b>Summary of Project (up to 300 words)</b>	

The early childhood education sector in Singapore faces some baseline problems: There is a lack of sustained professional practices and insufficient awareness of preschool teachers' epistemic beliefs and problems among teachers, along with infrequent ICT learning opportunities. Our project aims to address these gaps in this sector by creating a sustainable professional development model – the Knowledge Building Community (KBC) - one that embeds designs of collaboration, ownership of learning and leadership into the professional experiences of preschool teachers.

We envision two enabling mechanisms for sustaining the KBC: (1) The development of "ecological leaders" to broker resources and support the change processes involved; and (2) The creation of "ecological carryover effects" brought about by these leaders who promulgate learning across schools and classrooms. Our model of the KBC adopted in this project is based on an existent case study of a successful framework and network of primary and secondary school teachers.

In this project, we pose three inter-related questions:

- (1) How do the design and strategies of Knowledge Building Community support the developmental trajectory of the teacher community on inquiry-based learning practices?
- (2) How do early childhood educators' participation in a KBC influence their professional identities and competencies?
- (3) How do the KBC foster the ecological conditions (carryover effects) to sustain and spread innovative practices (in this case inquiry-based learning practices)?

This in-depth study of KBC in pre-school setting will contribute insightful findings for building a sustainable lifelong learning infrastructure and culture beyond preschool educators, possibly on other training contexts.