Staff professional development in international education

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

◆ Background of the project
◆ Conceptual principles
  > Bourdieu’s theory of social practice
  > Positioning theory
◆ Four analytical tools to interpret teachers’ PD
ARC project (2014-2017): Staff PD in international education

1. Analyse whether, how and for whom the internationalisation of education affect staff’s PD needs and practice;

2. Investigate to what extent teachers/professional staff play an active role in engaging with formal, informal, collective and individual dimensions of PD;

3. Develop a framework for understanding and enhancing staff PD in international education

Methods for data collection

- Interviews with different stakeholders (n=150):
  - (1) Teachers teaching on shore and offshore,
  - (2) Learning skills advisors
  - (3) Program directors
  - (4) Staff in charge of PD provision
  - (5) International program directors
  - (6) Policy-makers in international education
- Observations of staff professional development-related activities
FORMS OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

• Formal professional learning
• Informal professional learning
• Non-intended learning
• Collective > Individual learning
• Voluntary > Mandatory leaning
• Short-term > Ongoing professional learning
• Participatory > Passive role

PD ACTIVITIES FOCUS ON

• 1) a set of technical skills in teaching/working with international students/working in international education
• (2) subject knowledge
• (3) intercultural/cultural issues
• (4) building real and deep professional knowledge in international education
• (5) system compliance
• (6) any other issues?
NATURE OF PD PRACTICE

• Mentoring
• Collaboration among colleagues working in similar areas within the same institutions
• Networks
• Interest groups across departments/institutions
• Partnerships to support staff with their professional learning?

Conceptual framework: combining Bourdieu’s theory of social field and positioning theory

• Bourdieu (1986, 1998) conceptualises society as being constructed by different social fields defined by their own structures and characteristics
• Conceptualising the conditions that constrain or foster teachers’ PD habitus
• Dispositions of different actors involved in teacher PD
PD anchored in intersections of multiple fields

• Policy fields related to international education
• Skilled migration
• Government policy on Asian engagement
• Discourse on global competence
• Sectoral culture: VET and HE
• Institutional culture

Positioning theory

✦ Bourdieu’s theory of social practice acts as a broader framework to conceptualise the background conditions shaping staff PD

✦ Positioning theory (Harré & van Langenhove 1999) provides specific tools to analyse how teachers are positioned with respect to the moral orders in which they carry out social actions, in this case being engaged in PD

✦ how teachers and their PD practices are positioned with respect to their institutional structure, policy fields and the VET and HE cultures
Positioning theory (Davies & Harré, 1999; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999)

- Positioning theory: How people's intentional acts can be revealed through the ways they position themselves and others (Harré & van Langenhove 1999).

Agency and community within positioning theory

- Local moral agency: defined as social and purposeful action of the people
- Issues of community and agential action are central to positioning theory: a reciprocal relationship
- The ‘community’: defined as the institute and other background conditions
- ‘agency’: defined as the intentional actions of teachers or the extent they are active in the process of professional learning
- Agency and non-intended learning
In analysing the positioning of participants, the following four analytical tools will be used:

(i) Deliberate self-positioning
(ii) Other positioning
(iii) Forced self-positioning
(iv) Repositioning

References

CONTENTS

Thank you!!!

Your feedback!