



Dr Nadia Edmond

Nadia is programme leader for the Professional Doctorate in Education at the University of Brighton, School of Education. Her career includes teaching in Further Education and a number of research and academic posts in Education. Nadia's research and teaching build on her interest in critical perspectives on education and learning with particular focus on the relationship between formal and informal learning in professional development and professionalism as well as the role of Higher Education in the professions.

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Design:

**POST GRADUATE EDUCATION
RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2015**

Wednesday 15 April 2015 | Frank Richard Lecture Theatre | MIE

Exploring Methodologies
in **EDUCATIONAL
RESEARCH**

Conference Abstracts



MAURITIUS INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
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PROGRAMME

09h15-09h30	Welcome by Mrs O CUDIAN, Officer-in-Charge, MIE and Mrs Irena ANDREWS, Course Leader for MA Ed. programme at UoB
09h30-10h15	<i>Keynote address</i> by Dr Nadia EDMOND Education Policy, Practice and Research, engaging with Power, Knowledge and Ideology: methodology as striving for ethical meaning
10h15-10h30	Discussion
10h30-10h45	Tea
First session	Chair: Mr Gian SANDHAYA
10h45-11h10	Mrs Marie Lys CADET (MA Student)
11h10-11h35	Mr Sooryadev PURDASSEEA (Ed.D Student)
Second Session	Chair: Dr Pascal NADAL
11h40-12h00	Ms Vimla KEETHARY (MA Student)
12h00-12h25	Mr Mahend GUNGAPERSAD (Ed.D Student)
12h30-13h15	Lunch
13h15-13h45	Poster presentation and discussion
13h45-15h00	Round table discussions
15h00-15h30	Cohort Plenary

Teachers' constructions of informal teacher leadership in School YZ. A phenomenological case study.

Author

Mahend GUNGAPERSAD

Abstract

While international literature on teacher leadership has developed considerably, there is a comparative deficit in teacher leadership research in Mauritius. This paper contends that schools should not rely exclusively on the leadership of the head of school. Gone are the days when only the leadership of one person mattered and was enough to run a school. Placed against the backdrop of shared and distributed leadership, this research highlights the necessity to take teacher leadership more seriously in our secondary schools in order to ensure that the leadership potential of teachers is rightly harnessed and is used effectively by the school management.

The research articulates that a critical conceptualisation of informal teacher leadership is needed if we want distributed and shared leadership to become a reality in Mauritian secondary schools. It calls for the replacement of the traditional top-bottom style of management with a new leadership paradigm of sharing, transformation and empowerment that redefines teachers as leaders and partners in leadership.

Through the use of questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and personal professional narratives, this constructivist phenomenological research seeks to investigate and understand teachers' conceptions of informal teacher leadership at a secondary school.

Exploring subject choice at lower secondary level and the factors influencing the process from the perspective of students. A case study.

Author

Vimla KEETHARY

Abstract

This qualitative study conducted from the perspective of students sets out to explore subject choice and the factors influencing the process at lower secondary level. It developed from an original concern with the decline in the uptake of biology at lower secondary level and having also witnessed students who reconsider their choice due to their inability to perform to the required level in chosen subjects, I decided to embark upon this investigation. The sample consisted of 40 students who were going through the process of subject choice for the very first time in their school life. Focus group interviews and individual interviews were used for data collection. Interviews were scheduled at two different instances. The first interview was carried out to investigate intention of choice whilst the second one was carried out after students had executed their choice, and data was hence gathered on actual choice. Ultimately, the research findings revealed the following: career aspiration is the major determinant influencing subject choice and there is also high parental involvement in the process. Some other elements cited as factors impacting on choice were interest for the subject, perceived ability, teacher influence and influence of peers. The study also revealed that little support was provided by the school and this rendered the process stressful and difficult. Moreover, this work revealed that intention of choice differed from actual choice, mainly due to institutional limits inherent to subject permutations offered by the school. Based on the findings of the research, recommendations were made, the main one being the provision of required support and guidance to accompany students through this crucial process.

Education Policy, Practice and Research, engaging with Power, Knowledge and Ideology: methodology as striving for ethical meaning

Author

Dr Nadia EDMOND

Abstract

This paper considers and critically examines the nexus of education policy, practice and research and how it mediates the educational world's relationship with power, knowledge and ideology.

The paper provides a historical perspective of the development of education research and its relationship with policy and practice, charting its evolution from its emergence as a discipline in the mid 20th Century to the current context of the neoliberal world order and its particular educational manifestation in the "Global Education Reform Movement". I discuss methodology as a way in which we are both constituted as teachers and researchers and as a way of developing agency in resisting ideological conscription. Methodology requires us to question where we stand and what we think, and challenge how we think and our assumptions. In the face of the dominance of instrumental rationality in much education research, this paper argues for value rationality in such research and methodology as enabling of our striving for ethical meaning.

Implementing action research to evaluate the use of collaborative learning strategies in the teaching of technical vocabulary in Food and Nutrition at School Certificate level.

Author

Marie-Lys R. CADET

Abstract

This Masters Research was inspired by the quest to investigate the reasons behind the low attainment levels in Food and Nutrition at School Certificate level by girls studying in an urban State Secondary School in Mauritius. **“How can I enable students’ acquisition of technical vocabulary in Food and Nutrition?”** has been the overarching question that guided the inquiry process. It has been used as a lens to capture the nuances of the lives, experiences, and perspectives of the research participants.

Action Research was undertaken in an attempt to probe into the difficulties that students and teachers encounter when dealing with the technical terms of an applied science subject. Observation, student feedback cards, students’ written work, informal interview and a research journal were used to investigate how vocabulary learning strategies can promote both the teaching and learning of such specialized jargon, and determine the impact of collaborative interactions.

The word games devised and the structural analysis conducted in the first cycle contributed in awakening the word consciousness of students and uncovered spelling problems as well as long term retention issues. When students were allowed to devise their own strategies in the second cycle, mnemonics and grouping in a storyline in a funeral notice were prompted to develop memory techniques. Finally, for the last cycle, both the researcher and her subjects collaborated in the choice of strategies. The use of a role-play by the students enabled them to enact the abstract process of digestion and was effective in detecting and remedying a lack of understanding.

Altogether, findings revealed that students benefit more from collaborative learning experiences which contribute to develop their autonomy and ownership of learning. These experiences take place when the teacher becomes a facilitator of learning and allows students to participate in the decision making process.

Decline in Mathematics performance during transition from primary to secondary school: A study of two cases.

Author

Sooryadev PURDASSEEA

Abstract

As students transit from primary to secondary schools, they are required to extend and transform their mathematical knowledge and skills to meet the requirements of secondary mathematics learning. These learners are required to extend their whole number concepts, algebraic thinking, geometrical reasoning and measurement sense to ‘mathematize’ situations and solve problems. However, their long term performances in Mathematics have been shown to be greatly influenced by their experiences of transition. This study examines, by means of a case study, the experiences of two students who experienced a decline in their Mathematics performance in Form I, despite obtaining A+ grade for their end of primary cycle examinations. The two students, their parents and both primary and secondary school teachers were interviewed to gain deep insight into these experiences of transition and performance decline in Mathematics. While teacher-centred pedagogy was favoured in both primary and secondary schools, it was found that secondary school teachers adopted more expository teaching philosophies, compared to their primary counterparts, who relied mostly on drill and practice exercises. Parental and teacher monitoring diminished, resulting in a reduction of students’ involvement in mathematical activities. The results of this study also indicate that the choice of books by schools did not favour continuity in the curriculum. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that secondary teachers take cognizance of the teaching and learning of Mathematics at the primary level.