Reform, standards and teacher identity: Challenges of sustaining commitment.

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Abstract

Teacher commitment has been found to be a critical predictor of teachers’ work performance, absenteeism, retention, burnout and turnover, as well as having an important influence on students’ motivation, achievement, attitudes towards learning and being at school (Firestone (1996). Educational Administration Quarterly, 32(2), 209–235; Graham (1996). Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 67(1), 45–47; Louis (1998). School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 9(1), 1–27; Tsui & Cheng (1999). Educational Research and Evaluation, 5(3), 249–268). It is also a necessary ingredient to the successful implementation, adaptation or resistance reform agendas. Surprisingly, however, the relationship between teachers’ motivation, efficacy, job satisfaction and commitment, and between commitment and the quality of their work has not been the subject of extensive research. Some literature presents commitment as a feature of...
subject of extensive research. Some literature presents commitment as a feature of being and behaving as a professional (Helsby, Knight, McCulloch, Saunders, & Warburton (1997). A report to participants on the professional cultures of Teachers Research Project, Lancaster University, January). Others suggest that it fluctuates according to personal, institutional and policy contexts (Louis (1998). School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 9(1), 1–27) and identify different dimensions of commitment which interact and fluctuate (Tyree (1996). Journal of Educational Research, 89(5), 295–304). Others claim that teachers’ commitment tends to decrease progressively over the course of the teaching career (Fraser, Draper, & Taylor (1998). Evaluation and Research in Education, 12(2), 61–71; Huberman (1993). The lives of teachers. London: Cassell). In this research, experienced teachers in England and Australia were interviewed about their understandings of commitment. The data suggest that commitment may be better understood as a nested phenomena at the centre of which is a set of core, relatively permanent values based upon personal beliefs, images of self, role and identity which are subject to challenge by change which is socio-politically constructed.
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Reform, standards and teacher identity: Challenges of sustaining commitment, pararendzina restored.
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