

Dancing with Dinosaurs –
understanding how experienced
Physical Education teachers
sustain career-long professional
learning in diverse settings

Ashley Burnett, M.Ed, B.Ed, Dip T

School of Education

Faculty of Education, Humanities and Law

Flinders University

South Australia

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Summary

This thesis provides an interpretive study of the engagement of experienced Physical Education teachers in sustaining meaningful career-long professional learning.

The qualitative research was undertaken through the collection of evidence from six secondary school teachers, a review of the literature and reflections from field notes.

Case study evidence gathered over a two-year period provides an insight into the impact of professional learning on the development of teachers' knowledge that goes beyond surface technical knowledge to bring about change in their practice. Analysis of the research identified themes such as understanding of professional knowledge together with identification of personal education values, beliefs and practices that continue to inform a sense of moral purpose and self-efficacy by the participating teachers.

This research provides an insight into the complex world of teaching as it constantly changes, challenging the educational values, beliefs, and practices that influence the ways in which teachers teach every time they step into a classroom. Responding to this complex environment as teachers and its subsequent impact on those who believe that ongoing learning is an important part of their professional identity is at the heart of this research.

Today's world of increasing accountability as government policy shifts toward quality teaching performance standards in a predominantly marketised education environment now dominates how teachers perceive their professional identities. This study provides an opportunity to become familiar with how experienced teachers are able to identify what they need to change, and where, and how they are able to locate the professional learning support they need to bring about sustainable contextualised change.

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed.....

Date.....

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