The effectiveness of using digital video in pre-service and in-service teacher training in Cambodia

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Research Problem:

Using Digital Video in primary school teachers’ professional development in Cambodia.

Summary:

Extensive research has shown that teachers’ professional development can be improved by using participatory approaches, in which teachers have autonomy in their own learning process. Digital Video can be a help to promote the exchange of beliefs between teachers in a cooperative setting and help them reflect about educational practices. However, there is no evidence that the methods of professional development developed in Western countries also apply to teachers in a developing country such as Cambodia. Differences in (work) culture might affect this process and therefore influence the process of professional development. This research aims to investigate whether knowledge, skills and attitudes about student-centered teaching of student teachers and teachers of grade one to three in Cambodian primary schools can be improved by using a DVD and subsequent cooperative learning activities.

In two empirical evaluation studies, the effect of using Digital Video will be investigated in two educational contexts: the teacher training college and the primary school (grade 1-3). In the first evaluation study, a large sample of 150 student teachers from the teacher training college will be evaluated with respect to knowledge, skills and attitudes about student-centered methods at the start of their program. Next, from the total sample of 150 student teachers, an intervention group (N=21) will be followed while being engaged in a DVD project, which was developed by the Ministry of Education of Cambodia. Another subsample will act as the control group (N=21). Pre-tests and post-tests will be used to assess the student-teachers’ knowledge about student-centered methods in order to show the effect of using digital video within the curriculum, while student teachers’ self-assessments will indicate whether skills and attitudes have changed. In order to increase validity, additional data will be collected in the last phase of the first empirical study. A smaller sample of 6 student teachers from both the previously constructed intervention and control groups will be observed during their practice period with respect to their application of skills in the classroom. Also, influential contributors to this process – the mentor teachers – will be interviewed about their assessment of the student teachers’ skills in the practice period.

The context of the second evaluation study will be the primary education school, where 21 teachers will work with the same DVD project in a video club. Pre and post questionnaires will map what teachers know as well as their attitude about student-centered methods and to what degree these aspects have changed. Pre and post classroom observations will show whether teachers have improved their skills. A 2x2 experimental design will be applied in order to investigate under which
circumstances the use of Digital video is most effective with the following conditions: relevance of the material (action/model video) and group composition (pairs/community of learners). Semi-structured interviews will then be used to find out whether teachers’ attitudes have changed in the course of the intervention and how they perceive the effectiveness of the intervention for their professional development.