

**Middlesex University Dubai Research Seminar Series
January to May 2015**

Research Seminar Series 157

Gareth Allison

Higher Colleges of Technology

Social Dynamics Surrounding the Consumption of Non-Native Cuisines in a Multicultural Context

Abstract

This talk will outline a research project that has investigated the social dynamics surrounding the consumption of non-native cuisines in a multicultural context. Data were collected via depth interviews with 21 culturally diverse residents of Dubai. Data were analysed inductively, leading to the emergence of three themes that characterize the social dynamics underpinning the consumption of non-native cuisines: instrumental uses, expressive uses, and conviviality considerations. The study also suggests that the different types of cultural dynamics at play have different roles; some act as influencing or constraining factors in the everyday practice of multicultural consumption, while others are used more proactively as enablers. This study contributes to our understanding of how people 'practise conviviality' in multicultural marketplaces, providing insights into the complex social dynamics underpinning the consumption of non-native cuisines.

Biography

Dr. Gareth Allison obtained his first degrees, LL.B (Law) and B.A (Political Science) from the University of Canterbury (NZ) in 1994. He was also admitted as a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand in 1994. After graduation he worked in diverse roles in industry in New Zealand, the UK, and Australia, and travelled extensively through Asia, Africa, and Europe. He returned to study in 2003, and eventually obtained his PhD in Marketing from Lincoln University (NZ) in 2009. Prior to relocating to the UAE, Gareth worked at Lincoln University and Auckland University of Technology. He is currently working at HCT, but will be returning to his native city of Christchurch in July. In addition to the current study, his current research interests lie in the areas of ethical consumption in non-Western contexts, justification in online WOM, status consumption, and Wasta in B2B relationships in the Middle East.

Date: Wednesday 13th May 2015 (4-5pm)

Venue: Oasis Theatre, Block 16, Middlesex University Dubai, Knowledge Village.

Research Seminar Series 156

Erin Watson Lynn

Monash University

Transnational intersectionality: Case studies of immigration and entrepreneurship among women in the Indian diaspora in Australia.

Abstract

Australia has a history of migrants arriving from India dating back to the early 19th century. Halted by the introduction of White Australia Policy, immigration was restricted to Anglo-Indians until the end of the policy in 1973. Today, India is Australia's largest source of migrants (Museum Victoria). While some research has explored the experiences of the diaspora in Australia, there is an absence of literature that examines the experiences from the Indian woman's perspective. Globally, research demonstrates that for women who have migrated from India to industrialised nations, entrepreneurship is a mechanism to overcome ethnic marginalisation in the labour

market and subsequent underemployment. Additionally, it enables women to manage family responsibilities, increase their economic capital, and to renegotiate relationships within the family and the broader diaspora community. However, other research from India and Australia tells us that gender, caste, and class influence women's motivations to enter self-employment, perceived business outcomes and the everyday experience of entrepreneurship.

The purpose of this study is to explore immigration and entrepreneurship among first generation migrant women from India. Ten case studies are currently in progress using a demographic survey, a narrative interview, a field observation, and a semi-structured interview. Emerging findings suggest that an intersection between class, caste and immigration status structure theories of immigration and entrepreneurship among the Indian diaspora in Australia.

Biography

Erin Watson Lynn is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Faculty of Business and Economics at Monash University, Melbourne, Australia. Graduating with a Bachelor of Social Science from Swinburne University of Technology, Erin received Honours equivalency for her contribution to research whilst working with the Business, Work and Ageing Centre for Research. Erin also holds a Diploma in Management and a Diploma in Business Management (Human Resources) and is an awardee of multiple scholarships at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Since 2009, Erin has worked as a Research Assistant in a number of departments at Monash and Swinburne in Melbourne, and United Nations ESCAP in New Delhi. During this time she has published in Australia, China, and South Asia, and has co-authored papers for a number of conferences in North America and Europe. As one of Australia's delegates to the Group of Twenty Youth Summit in Turkey, Erin is currently completing a Global Voices Research Fellowship on entrepreneurship and youth unemployment. Erin's research interests include migration, entrepreneurship, intergenerational management and South Asia studies, usually with a gendered perspective.

Date: Wednesday 6th May 2015 (4-5pm)

Venue: Oasis Theatre, Block 16, Middlesex University Dubai, Knowledge Village.

Research Seminar Series 155

Douglas Russell

Middlesex University Dubai

Motivational mediators of self-regulation among university students in the UAE

Abstract

The concept of self-regulated learning has become increasingly important in higher educational institutes seeking to provide students with a holistic education (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Future time perspective is one cognitive/motivational construct which is seen as a defining feature for student success (de Bilde, Vansteenkiste, & Lens, 2011). Previous research has shown that a deep future time perspective is related to greater self-regulation, which is the antithesis of student resistance (Bembenutty & Karabenick, 2004). Other researchers have linked self-efficacy with similar learning strategies and outcomes (Zimmerman, 2000). It is important for students entering, and faculty within higher education, to understand whether future time perspective or self-efficacy is more predictive of self-regulation. Since self-regulation is a learnt behaviour, teachers could impart the metacognitive constructs that will foster the development of self-regulated learning skills. Through the use convenience sampling, data was collected via an online survey and was analyzed using statistical and inferential measures in order to arrive at a better understanding of whether future time perspective or self-efficacy is a motivational mediator

for self-regulated learning behaviours. This paper seeks to support both students and faculty in how to draw on self-regulated learning in order to optimize students success in higher education.

Biography

Douglas Russell graduated from Auckland College of Education in 2002 with a Bachelors of Education (Primary teaching) and promptly jumped on a plane to Australia where he gained his first role as a teacher. Moving to the UK and across to Dubai Douglas continued to teach across a range of subject areas to different age groups but his passion for Psychology bought him to Middlesex – as a student. Graduating in 2013 with a Masters in Applied Psychology with distinction Douglas was selected and asked to work in the Psychology department part time, quickly gaining experience in higher education, presenting at the Second National Applied Psychology Conference at Middlesex Dubai and then receiving a full time post in September last year teaching in the education and psychology departments. Having presented at the Third National Conference in Psychology Douglas gained his first ‘badge’ of international conference presenting in Greece in February of this year presenting the paper you are hearing about today. His research interests include personality, clinical disorders, specifically in nonclinical populations, executive functioning and gender issues and a focus on younger populations.

Date: Wednesday 29th April 2015 (4-5pm)

Venue: Oasis Theatre, Block 16, Middlesex University Dubai, Knowledge Village.

Research Seminar Series 154

Cody Morris Paris & Jakob Pietschnig
Middlesex University Dubai

‘But first, let me take a selfie’: Personality traits as predictors of travel selfie taking and sharing behaviors

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the ‘travel selfie’ attitudes and behaviors and the relationship with personality. This paper attempts to address questions: What do individuals include in the background of their travel selfies? Who do they share the travel selfies with and how? And what is the impact personality and self-esteem on this behavior? For this study, a survey was administered online to 131 university students (83f; mean age = 20.39, *SD* = 4.09). The test instrument included the HEXACO model of personality and the Rosenberg self-esteem scale. Participants’ self-reported attitudes towards taking selfies and selfie-taking and sharing behavior via online social networks were assessed using purposefully developed scales. Findings suggest that positive attitudes towards taking selfies are mainly driven by emotionality and extraversion whilst selfie taking frequency and number of contacts they are shared with appear to be additionally related to low humility.

Biography

Dr. Cody Morris Paris: Cody is an Associate Professor, Acting Deputy Director, Programme Coordinator for Social Science, and Chair of the Research Committee at Middlesex University Dubai. He is also a Senior Research Fellow with University of Johannesburg, serves on the Executive Board of the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education and Research, and is on the Board of Directors of Amizade, a global-service learning NGO with UN Consultative status. From Arizona State University he received his PhD in Community Resource Development (2010), M.Sc. in Tourism Studies (2008), and Bachelors of Interdisciplinary Studies in International Geography and Political Science with minors in Cultural Anthropology and Tourism (2005). His research has been recognized through several prestigious awards including

International Federation of IT and Travel & Tourism Journal Article of the Year (2013) Award given to the 'most innovative and rigorous article on IT and Tourism,' the Journal of Travel Research Article of the Year Award (2013), and the Travel and Tourism Research Association Keeling Dissertation Award given to the best PhD dissertation in the field of tourism completed between 2008-2011. Cody has published widely in top peer reviewed journals and presented at and organized numerous international conferences. His primary research interests include: Technology and Tourism, Geopolitics and Tourism, Sustainable Development, Mobilities, and Experiential Learning.

Dr. Jakob Pietschnig: After receiving his M.Sc. in Psychology in 2008 from the University of Vienna, Jakob worked as a Research Associate at the Methods Unit of the Department of Basic Psychological Research at the University of Vienna. At this very place he received his Ph.D. (with distinction) in June 2012 and has been working with Middlesex University Dubai since September of the same year. Jakob co-authored more than 30 articles in peer-reviewed international scientific journals and boasts an equal number of contributions in international conferences. Jakob has been consulted as a Peer Reviewer by several high-impact journals, including among others the British Journal of Psychology, the European Journal of Personality, and Intelligence. In June 2014, Jakob has been appointed as an Academic Editor to the journal PLOS ONE. In 2011, Jakob received the John B. Carroll Award for Research Methodology of the International Society for Intelligence Research. More recently, he was co-awarded the Innovation Award for Teaching and Learning 2013 from Middlesex University Dubai. Jakob's research interests include statistical methods in the framework of meta-analysis, suicide prevention, and generational IQ gains (Flynn effects). His work on the Mozart effect was covered by media in more than 75 countries. In May 2015, Jakob will assume a role as postdoctoral researcher at the Differential Psychology Unit of the Department of Applied Psychology at the University of Vienna.

Date: Wednesday 22nd April 2015

Venue: Oasis Theatre, Block 16, Middlesex University Dubai, Knowledge Village.

Research Seminar Series 153

Eleni Petkari

Middlesex University Dubai

Student Management Teams as a Means of Communication and Learning Experience
Satisfaction: An Explorative Study

Abstract

The study aimed to assess the contribution of Student Management Teams (SMTs) in a large undergraduate class and identify barriers and facilitators of the communication process and learning experience. SMTs were put into practice supported by an Online Learning Management System (OLMS: easyclass). It was hypothesized that students would positively evaluate their team participation, its role to the communication process and learning experience and there would be positive associations between the LMS, communication and learning experience. The results confirmed the hypotheses showing the effectiveness of SMTs, highlighting the use of OLMS and confirming the relationship between communication and learning experience satisfaction, also supported by qualitative data.

Biography

Degrees: 2004 BSc Degree in Psychology from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece; 2005 Specialization in Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Integral Assistance to Severe Mental

Illness University of Deusto, Bilbao, Spain; 2007 Postgraduate studies in Clinical and Health Psychology, University of Malaga and University of Granada, Spain; 2010 PhD in Social Psychiatry and Community Care, University of Granada, Spain; 2015 PG Cert HE Middlesex University

Research Interests: Quality of Life in Mental Illness, Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Mental Health Culture and Psychopathology

Date: Wednesday 8th April 2015 (4-5pm)

Venue: Oasis Theatre, Block 16, Middlesex University Dubai, Knowledge Village.

Research Seminar Series 152

Lucyann Kerry

Middlesex University Dubai

'Begin Again', as a 'Special Relationship' for Global Film Marketability

Abstract

This mini-case study examines the Hollywood film 'Begin Again' in the global market to identify globalizing characteristics for box office appeal and marketability. Through the application of the Tomlinson's theory of globalization and culture in the case study, this presentation argues that this film exemplifies an underlying 'special Relationship' of the Hollywood film industry and the British industry as a globalizing process. It further analyzes the film's global box office success in relation to its genre conventions and cultural representations concluding that although there may be British elements of appeal designed into the film, that the romantic comedy genre has also provided a globalizing frame for greater accessibility and penetration into the East Asian global market, most specifically South Korea.

Biography

Lucyann Kerry is an American, originally from the city of Columbus, Ohio in America's Midwestern heartland. Early on in her career she had been a filmmaker, serving as the head of the independent filmmakers association in Washington, D.C. and has worked professionally in marketing, advertising and public relations. She was mentored by the Hollywood publicist Stan Musgrove, she has been a director of public relations for the New York consumer marketing firm, The Creative Source, she represented the civil rights leader James Forman with his publisher Open Hand, and has also served on the marketing and ad sales teams of Jane's Information Group and the Wall Street Journal Europe. With the fall of the Soviet Union, she helped introduce Western style media education and the study of public relations and corporate communications in Estonia, she spent the last year teaching advertising and media production at the University of Guam and prior to Guam taught film and communications at Kimep University in Kazakhstan. She learned film production at New York University, she holds a masters degree in film from the University of Southern California Cinema School and she has a Phd in film from the University of Exeter, UK.

Date: Wednesday 1st April 2015 (4-5pm)

Venue: Oasis Theatre, Block 16, Middlesex University Dubai, Knowledge Village.

Research Seminar Series 151

Mick King

Middlesex University Dubai

Where is the Arabic? Questioning the absence of students' L1 in federal tertiary education in the UAE

Abstract

English medium of instruction (EMI) policy in the Arabian Gulf is sometimes offered universally, thereby contradicting the general belief that such education is for the economic elite. Every student has the same opportunity to study in what is perceived as the developed world's lingua franca, the language of business and, by association, the language of success. However, such a policy may exclude learners with weak English skills or who prefer to use their mother tongue. This presentation adds to the embryonic body of research into EMI in the Gulf by analyzing findings from the final stage of a doctoral study into content teacher views on EMI in federal tertiary settings in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Findings suggest that although there is some support for EMI among the sample, there are also attendant problems, with the position of Arabic appearing across many of the emergent themes. The inclusion of Arabic in the federal tertiary curriculum is, therefore, one of a number of recommendations emanating from the study.

Biography

Mick King is Senior Lecturer in Foundations and Education at Middlesex University Dubai. His 25-year career has included taking up a number of educational roles. He has taught across a variety of subject areas and to a variety of student types and levels. The last decade has seen him expand his academic wings as he has presented his research widely and published regularly. He reviews for regional journals and conferences and has sat on a number of conference committees. He has also held a number of roles in the TESOL Arabia organization, where he is currently SIG Coordinator for the UAE. Mick is a Teaching Fellow of Middlesex University, has two PG certificates in higher education, an M.Sc. in Educational Management and has just completed his EdD from Exeter University, UK. This presentation summarises the findings from his thesis.

Date: Wednesday 25th March 2015 (4-5pm)

Venue: Oasis Theatre, Block 16, Middlesex University Dubai, Knowledge Village.

Research Seminar Series 150

Jakob Pietschnig

Middlesex University Dubai

IQ (still) on the rise – but why? Meta-analytical evidence for global trajectory, moderating variables, and potential causes of the Flynn effect.

Abstract

Evidence for changes of general population IQ test scores over time (i.e., the Flynn effect) have been observed by now in a considerable number of different countries. These changes have been typically observed to be positive, however, change patterns between countries differ considerably in strength and in some cases even in direction. Moreover, changes appear to be differentiated in regard to intelligence domain, indicating in most of the studies substantially larger gains for fluid (i.e., reflecting on-the-spot reasoning ability) than crystallized IQ tasks (i.e., reflecting knowledge). A plethora of theories have been proposed to explain IQ gains and these seemingly erratic country-specific change patterns. However, the potential explanatory value of these theories remains to date unclear, perhaps owing to the fact that a comprehensive account of global IQ test score changes has so far been unavailable. Here, I present evidence of the first formal meta-analysis of the Flynn effect of all available primary studies based on evidence over 105 years (1909-2013) from more than 3.900.000 participants in 31 countries. Global IQ changes were shown to amount to 3 IQ points increase per decade over the investigated timespan, however, gains were not linear, indicating decreasing strength in more recent decades. As

expected, fluid IQ gains were substantially stronger than crystallized IQ gains. Interestingly though, fluid gains were related to age indicating stronger gains for adults than children whilst crystallized gains were mainly driven by timespan-specific within-country GDP change. In all, the presently observed robust (albeit decelerating) IQ gains appear to be most likely to factors related to decreases in life history speed (specifically, better education and nutrition, less pathogen stress) and changes in test taking behaviour. Domain differences may be attributed to social multiplier effects and growth in economic prosperity of countries.

Biography

After receiving his M.Sc. in Psychology in 2008 from the University of Vienna, Jakob worked as a Research Associate at the Methods Unit of the Department of Basic Psychological Research at the University of Vienna. At this very place he received his Ph.D. (with distinction) in June 2012 and has been working with Middlesex University Dubai since September of the same year. Jakob co-authored more than 30 articles in peer-reviewed international scientific journals and boasts an equal number of contributions in international conferences. Jakob has been consulted as a Peer Reviewer by several high-impact journals, including among others the British Journal of Psychology, the European Journal of Personality, and Intelligence. In June 2014, Jakob has been appointed as an Academic Editor to the journal PLOS ONE. In 2011, Jakob received the John B. Carroll Award for Research Methodology of the International Society for Intelligence Research. More recently, he was co-awarded the Innovation Award for Teaching and Learning 2013 from Middlesex University Dubai. Jakob's research interests include statistical methods in the framework of meta-analysis, suicide prevention, and generational IQ gains (Flynn effects). His work on the Mozart effect was covered by media in more than 75 countries. In May 2015, Jakob will assume a role as postdoctoral researcher at the Differential Psychology Unit of the Department of Applied Psychology at the University of Vienna.

Date: Wednesday 11th March 2015 (4-5pm)

Venue: Oasis Theatre, Block 16, Middlesex University Dubai, Knowledge Village.

Research Seminar Series 149

Raed Awamleh

Middlesex University Dubai

“Twenty Years of Charismatic & Transformational Leadership Research: A model for the future”

Abstract

Over one hundred years ago Max Weber wrote his manuscript titled “on charisma and institution building”. He examined the impact of charismatic leadership on followers in the social, religious, and political spheres. Since then, a considerable body of literature has been developing in exploring the components of charisma and the way it interacts with its environment. James Burns, in his 1978 Pulitzer prize work on leadership, advanced number of significant theoretical and practical propositions which Bernard Bass and key others developed further to establish the field of transformational leadership as it applies to today's organizations. Transformational leadership is linked to positive individual and organizational outcomes including higher levels of job satisfaction and performance, organizational commitment, team work, and superior business results. The author began his inquiry into this area of research twenty years ago and has since assessed it, empirically and theoretically, in a variety of settings across multicultural and expatriate environments and in a range of business and organizational conditions. The author worked independently, and in collaboration with other researchers, aiming to contribute positively to this area of knowledge. Furthermore, case studies of charismatic/transformational leaders

were examined over the years enhancing our understanding of these critical concepts. In this paper, the author aims to propose a model that can potentially guide both future empirical research and practical developments in this field. Limitations of current thinking on charismatic/transformational leadership will be addressed in addition to implications for change management and strategic management.

Biography

Raed Awamleh is a full Professor of Management at Middlesex University Dubai. Between 2008 and 2014, he was the University's Director (and a Pro Vice Chancellor between 2011 and 2014). Previously, Professor Awamleh was the Dean of Academic Affairs at the University of Wollongong in Dubai and the Assistant Dean of the Faculty of Business at the University of Jordan. Raed specializes in leadership and strategy and has numerous international management publications in reputed academic journals, and has won a number of best papers award in international conferences. Dr. Awamleh has a wide corporate consulting and executive development experience across the Middle East in both private and public sectors. His industry experience also included being a lead assessor for prestigious excellence awards such as King Abdullah II Excellence Award, Dubai Excellence Award, and Ras Al Khaimah Excellence Award. Professor Awamleh holds a PhD in Management from the University of Mississippi (USA), an MBA in Finance from Mercer University (USA), and a BBA from Yarmouk University (Jordan). Professor Awamleh is also an alumnus of the Oxford University Strategic Leadership Program (UK). In March 2015, Professor Awamleh will take on the role of Dean of the Dubai School of Government (recently renamed Mohammad Bin Rashid School of Government) under the Dubai Executive Council.

Date: Wednesday 4th March 2015 (4-5pm)

Venue: Oasis Theatre, Block 16, Middlesex University Dubai, Knowledge Village.

Research Seminar Series 148

Faiza Umar

Middlesex University Dubai

Professional Development in the 21st Century: The emerging need to develop a collaborative and connected learning community

Abstract

This study examines the nature of Professional Development (PD) in the 21st century and the role that it plays in the evolution of an individual's Professional Learning Network (PLN). It also investigates this role within the perspective of a Community of Inquiry (CoI) and raises the question as to how such practices can be made more sustainable. The study was conducted using the actionresearch paradigm and the ultimate aim was to develop a PD session that would encourage collaboration and sharing of best practices. For this purpose the focus of the PD workshop was the use of e-learning tools in Higher Education. The pre-intervention stage of data collection focused toward identifying those lecturers who were in a position to share best practices regarding this. This information subsequently helped in designing an intervention in the form of an interactive 'Speedy PD' session that was delivered university-wide and enabled lecturers to share best practices and practical tips to develop their PLNs and their teaching practice. The post-intervention findings, using quantitative and qualitative data analysis, suggest that, in order to form functioning Communities of Inquiry, educators need to be exposed to a more inclusive, personalised and localised professional development experience which can help them to co-exist in a connected and sustainable professional learning network. The efficacy of

the format used for the PD workshop also highlighted the importance of peer collaboration and the benefit of using case studies as a valuable way of sharing information.

Biography

Faiza has been teaching English Language and Academic Writing Skills to non-native speakers for over 14 years and is currently employed at Middlesex University Dubai as a lecturer for Academic Writing on the International Foundation Programme and is also a facilitator for the Academic Enrichment Programme. Her qualifications include a Master's degree in Education (Leadership, Management and Change), and another one in English Literature. She has a certification in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language and recently completed her Post Graduate Certification in Higher Education from Middlesex University, Dubai. Her research interests include the use of technology in education and the teaching of English as a foreign language.

Date: Wednesday 25th February 2015 (4-5pm)

Venue: Oasis Theatre, Block 16, Middlesex University Dubai, Knowledge Village.

Research Seminar Series 147

Tenia Kyriazi

Middlesex University Dubai

Using technology to introduce frequent assessments for effective learning: Registering student perceptions

Abstract

Assessment has a dominant influence in student learning, therefore carrying great significance in higher education. Scholars and practitioners seeking to find ways to introduce assessment schemes that promote effective learning have called for the introduction of more frequent and more diversified assessment tasks that are aligned with learning outcomes and teaching strategies. The use of available technological tools, such as online student management platforms, can facilitate the introduction of frequent and diversified assessment tasks, making it user friendly, as well as, cost and time-effective. The present study attempts to register student perceptions on the impact of frequent assessments with the use of technology on effective learning, in the context of a third year Business undergraduate course in an overseas campus of a British University. A mixed (qualitative/quantitative) research methodology study is conducted in the course of nine weeks with a sample of 30 students. During this period, students are assessed weekly through an online e-assessment platform. The same questionnaire, consisting of two Likert-type and one open-ended question, attempting to register student perceptions of frequent assessment with the use of technology, is administered at the beginning of the term (week 1), mid-way (week 5) and at the end of the research study period (week 9). A repeated measures ANOVA is used for quantitative data analysis and Content Analysis is applied to process the qualitative data.

Biography

Dr. Tenia Kyriazi is a qualified attorney, admitted at the Athens Bar Association. She holds a Ph.D in *International Law* from the University of Athens, Greece, an LL.M in *International Law and International Relations* from the University of Kent, UK and an LL.B. from the University of Athens, Greece.

She is a Senior Lecturer in Law and the Campus Programme Coordinator for LL.B at Middlesex University Dubai. Her academic focus is on International Law, Human Rights, International Organizations and European Union Law.

Date: Wednesday 18th February 2015 (4-5pm)

Venue: Oasis Theatre, Block 16, Middlesex University Dubai, Knowledge Village.

Research Seminar Series 146

Michelle McKenna

Undertaking Research for Commercial Purposes in the World of FMCG

Abstract

Reliable data in the Middle East is something of a rarity. Big name companies in market research have had a focus on the greater Gulf region for almost ten years now, but cultural differences mean that a different approach is needed and is still being developed. While there is an abundance of data available through trade statistics and other sources across Europe and the US, this is somewhat more difficult to come by in the MENA region. Validation of information is a big concern for any company looking to enter these markets, where the differences in data presented can be as much as tenfold. Accountability and transparency are growing concerns in the food industry, to help company's make informed decisions about market entry strategies, new product development and improving innovations for competitive advantage. Producing quality research is a costly exercise and the market research arena can be seen as a saturated market. Global brands compete with small, niche companies. Understanding market dynamics and having an identifiable USP is critical to success. There is often a gap in the market, but understanding the market in the gap can be the difference between success and failure. Companies are demanding better information but are not always prepared to pay for it. Increasing competition is forcing people in all markets to evaluate their needs and clarify their informational requirements before spending any money. There is a constant pressure to reduce costs of production, but there is also a need to keep the high quality of the research produced – that might be only achieved through higher costs.

Biography

Michelle has been living in Dubai for almost 3 years and working in research and marketing. Previously she worked for an education company, covering Ireland and parts of the UK, delivering training to academics and driving feedback programs across various divisions of the company to improve overall operational effectiveness. Michelle's focus is on building relationships to maximize returns for each partner in the B2B chain.

Date: Wednesday 11th February 2015 (4-5pm)

Venue: Oasis Theatre, Block 16, Middlesex University Dubai, Knowledge Village.

Research Seminar Series 145

Christina Gitsaki

Zayed University, UAE

Achieving Teacher Transformation Through Communities of Practice

Abstract

Achieving teacher transformation through professional development training programs is not always guaranteed. Research has shown that teacher transformative learning is more likely to occur through professional interactions with colleagues and critical reflection. Such processes

can help teachers develop new knowledge, change their previous beliefs about teaching, implement new strategies in class, and improve their classroom teaching practice. A Community of Practice (CoP) professional development model provides an environment where such learning can be achieved. While popular in the West, the CoP model is underused in parts of the world that have traditional educational systems, such as the Middle East. This session reports on a teacher professional development program using a CoP model designed to provide training on classroom teaching strategies and techniques to 25 college teachers in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The presenter will first describe the process of the CoP program and then report on the results of an investigation of the participants' attitudes towards the program and the content of the training sessions as well as how they implemented the specific teaching techniques in their classes.

Biography

Dr. Christina Gitsaki is the Research Coordinator at CEI. During her 20-year career in the higher education sector she has contributed to the field in a number of different capacities such as English language teacher, applied linguistics lecturer, pre-service teacher educator, in-service teacher trainer, textbook author, project manager, curriculum leader, editor, and researcher. In the past she served as the UNESCO Chair in Applied Research in Education in Sharjah and later as the Associate Dean of the Foundations program at HCT. Before coming to the UAE, she worked at The University of Queensland (UQ) in Australia, where she educated pre-service ESL teachers and supervised Masters and Ph.D. students in language education research. She has worked with Education Queensland and The Learning Federation of the Curriculum Corporation, Australia on state and federal education projects such as the creation of digital Learning Objects for K-12 ESL students. Dr. Gitsaki has presented her research at International Conferences, has been an invited speaker at various professional events and she has published 65 papers in refereed journals and book chapters on language acquisition and pedagogy. She is the author, editor and co-editor of eleven books on language education research. At CEI she oversees the Mobile Learning Research Fund, the SoTL Certification Course, the development of resources for research and she provides advice and mentorship to faculty who are interested in engaging in research on teaching and learning.

Date: Wednesday 4th February 2015 (4-5pm)

Venue: Oasis Theatre, Block 16, Middlesex University Dubai, Knowledge Village.