Migrant Women English Instructors' Transformative Workplace Learning Experiences in Post-Secondary English Language Programs in Ontario, Canada

Authors : Justine Jun

Abstract : This study aims to reveal migrant women English instructors' workplace learning experiences in Canadian post-secondary institutions in Ontario. Although many scholars have conducted research studies on internationally educated teachers and their professional and employment challenges, few studies have recorded migrant women English language instructors' professional learning and support experiences in post-secondary English language programs in Canada. This study employs a qualitative research paradigm. Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory is an essential lens for the researcher to explain, analyze, and interpret the research data. It is a collaborative research project. The researcher and participants cooperatively create photographic or other artwork data responding to the research questions. Photovoice and arts-informed data collection methodology are the main methods. Research participants engage in the study as co-researchers and inquire about their own workplace learning experiences, actively utilizing their critical self-reflective and dialogic skills. Co-researchers individually select the forms of artwork they prefer to engage with to represent their transformative workplace learning experiences about the Canadian workplace cultures that they underwent while working with colleagues and administrators in the workplace. Once the co-researchers generate their cultural artifacts as research data, they collaboratively interpret their artworks with the researcher and other volunteer co-researchers. Co-researchers jointly investigate the themes emerging from the artworks. They also interpret the meanings of their own and others' workplace learning experiences embedded in the artworks through interactive one-on-one or group interviews. The following are the research questions that the migrant women English instructor participants examine and answer: (1) What have they learned about their workplace culture and how do they explain their learning experiences?; (2) How transformative have their learning experiences been at work?; (3) How have their colleagues and administrators influenced their transformative learning?; (4) What kind of support have they received? What supports have been valuable to them and what changes would they like to see?; (5) What have their learning experiences transformed?; (6) What has this arts-informed research process transformed? The study findings implicate English language instructor support currently practiced in post-secondary English language programs in Ontario, Canada, especially for migrant women English instructors. This research is a doctoral empirical study in progress. This research has the urgency to address the research problem that few studies have investigated migrant English instructors' professional learning and support issues in the workplace, precisely that of English instructors working with adult learners in Canada. While appropriate social and professional support for migrant English instructors is required throughout the country, the present workplace realities in Ontario's English language programs need to be heard soon. For that purpose, the conceptualization of this study is crucial. It makes the investigation of under-represented instructors' under-researched social phenomena, workplace learning and support, viable and rigorous. This paper demonstrates the robust theorization of English instructors' workplace experiences using Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory in the English language teacher education field.

Keywords : English teacher education, professional learning, transformative learning theory, workplace learning

Conference Title : ICTLE 2021 : International Conference on Transformative Learning and Education
Conference Location : Istanbul, Türkiye
Conference Dates : January 28-29, 2021