

Identity Construction of English Language Teachers from Nepal: A Narrative Inquiry

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Abstract : Given the widespread concentration on beliefs, values, emotions, critical incidents, and practices in exploring teachers' professional identities, this study presents the trajectories of identity construction of three English language teachers from Nepal, analyzing their storied lives from schoolteachers to university professors. For this purpose, the article considered the three-dimensional professional development model to explore the effective mediation by the state agencies, culture and the policies, appropriate support from the organizations, and the bottom-up initiatives taken by the teachers in their professional development. Besides, the professional development journey derived from the in-depth interview of the participants is analyzed by employing communities of practice theory, particularly engagement, alignment, and imagination, as theoretical categories to discover their professional identities. The analysis revealed that passion for language, creativity, and motivation to learn English during childhood initially encouraged them to study English. In addition, inspiration from their teachers during their schooling and later a competitive working environment motivated them to experiment with innovative teaching approaches and establish themselves in the profession. Furthermore, diversification in university teaching according to university requirements and resultant divergence from the professional root ultimately transformed their identity beyond English teachers. Finally, university policy, customization of teachers as per the university requirement, and their survival strategy as English teachers in a university where technical subjects are given more priority has impacted their professional identities.

Keywords : teachers' professional development, English language teaching, professional identity, communities of practice

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