Abstracts

Quality Assurance in Private Higher Education in Ghana: Perspectives of Administrators and International Higher Education Specialists

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This paper examined private higher education in Ghana and the implementation of quality assurance procedures from the perspectives of administrators and international higher education specialists. Using the three main isomorphic classifications (coercive, mimetic and normative) of DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) institutional theory, this qualitative study explored how regulatory measures impact the efforts of private providers towards meeting quality assurance standards. Administrators from seven private higher education institutions in Ghana and three international higher education specialists were purposefully selected as sample for this paper. The outcome of the open-ended interviews found evidence of efforts private institutions were making towards meeting their quality assurance requirements through mimetic, coercive and normative isomorphism. These were indicated through institutional affiliations and conformity to mentoring institution's educational programs among others. However, Ghana's private higher education landscape has a number of challenges that include mixed perceptions about the quality of educational programs offered that promoted learning, and varied influences on academic programs. These issues would require a holistic approach in order to find long lasting solutions. Further, the continual increase in private providers would require a quality assurance process that would promote genuine actors.

*Keyword*s: quality assurance, institutional theory, private higher education, institutional affiliations.

The adult learner's transformational journey: an italian experience study tour

Susan Sholar Hanny, Lori Risley

Experiential learning through international education via study tours is an important instrument for adult learners on their path toward *transformation*. Study tours are a method in which the learners can gain a deeper understanding of the world and help shape their worldview as well as gain an appreciation for cultural diversity. This research aimed to establish a connection between international study tours and transformational learning for adult learners. Additionally, an intended outcome of this research is to inform postsecondary institutions of desired learning experiences from an adult learner's perspective enabling institutions to serve this underrepresented demographic better. Furthermore; this paper identifies unintended outcomes that can serve as a guide for future study tour facilitators and institutions focused on adult learners' transformation.

Keywords: transformational, adult learner, adult student, experiential learning.

Learning and teaching processes in university teaching. Between system requirements and didactic innovation

Daniela Robasto

The national and international pedagogical literature regarding the evaluation and self-evaluation processes of higher education systems, highlighted the possible distortions, in terms of effectiveness of the teaching-learning process, of the use of tools for assessment based on the opinion of students (Feldman, 1986; Rahnema, Kroll, & Jennings, 2007) or on product or result indicators (Jones & Taylor, 1990). Frequently the risk is not to detect what is the teaching provided and what are the expected learning outcomes (and then those achieved). If we take into consideration the R3 indicators adopted by ANVUR in the Italian AVA system, there is a partial confirmation of the roots that are not strictly pedagogical from which the first methodological choices of evaluation and self-evaluation of the university system have taken place, but new openings and new spaces can also be seen, for a joint and interdisciplinary reflection, aimed at improving the teaching/learning processes.

In the present paper, after a brief legislative framework concerning the concept of autonomy (including teaching) of the university system, the syllabus is presented as the main documentary source for self-assessment of the subjective and collegial interpretation of the concept of didactic autonomy. In the final part of the paper there is also a pilot project that was launched in the University of Parma and which has continued, at the same time, targeted interventions for teacher training, diagnostic surveys and innovation in teaching processes.

Keywords: university teaching, learning processes, system self-assessment, didactic innovation, syllabus.

Initial support teachers training through storytelling methodology. A research in the laboratories of the specialization course in Palermo

Giuseppa Cappuccio, Gabriella Ferrara

The present work describes the results of a research conducted with 450 students and 52 laboratory teachers attending the degree course in Specialization support activities of the University of Palermo during the academic year 2017-2018. The validity of the Mcdrury's & Alterio (2003) storytelling model was checked thanks to the research process and in order to reinforce students' reflective skills, narrative competence and critical revision.

Keywords: laboratory, storytelling, reflective learning, research, narrative competence.

Music inclusion experience for university students. Construction of a shared musical instrument

Isabella Quatera

Can music be understood as an inclusive language? Moreover, considering the sudden rhythms of social and economic changes, it is necessary to provide university students with a set of skills and methods that can be applied to the continuous changing situations and variable contexts. In relation to this, the opportunities offered by the pedagogical approach of Service

Learning applied to music are important. Focus of the experience is the bridge between the world of special pedagogy with that of music, creatively endured by a group of ten university students, attending various courses at University "Aldo Moro" of Bari who took part in a 40-hour workshop concerning the design and construction of a collective musical instrument. It was a matter of conceiving and constructively constructing a non-existent musical instrument through the creation of a group that mutually assign roles and tasks even at a distance and through the use of a designed, built and dedicated e-learning platform where "the builders" are self-assessed and corrected. This is meant to collectively seek a solution to respond to the need to transform a meaningful movement into a meaningful vibration. It turned out to be an active process of negotiation of meanings, aimed at the genesis of a new technique for the potential of music, during a training experience such as the university one.

Keywords: university, inclusion, music, service learning, interaction. vulnerability.

Dance, reflect, learn

Guido Benvenuto, Delfina Stella, Elena Viti

Arts are an integral part of the culture of education and a privileged tool for practical knowledge and active learning, because they are based on learning models focused on experience and personal and creative development of individuals or groups involved in the educational practice. In this context, dance aims to redefine ideals and stereotypes linked to the imaginary of equilibrium and aesthetic perfection to place itself and act in educational and social contexts through a creative, inclusive and wandering practice. From this point of view the teaching of dance is facing new century challenges, working on the personalization of some new educational paths, focusing on the knowledge and practice of the art of movement. The research project we present is a didactic and performing dance project that involved three groups of dancers and non-dancers in a learning path oriented towards the development of creativity and reflective practice through dance. The project was carried out in Finland and discussed as the final thesis of a master degree at the National Academy of Dance in Rome.

Keywords: dance education, reflective thinking, active learning, creative, practice, intergenerationality.