FACTORS INFLUENCING TEACHERS’ INTERNATIONAL ENACTMENT OF AUSTRALIAN VET CURRICULA
What are the contextual factors that influence teachers’ enactment of the intended curriculum in transnational settings?
• Phenomenological research
  • Teachers’ perspective
  • Essence of teachers’ experience

• In-depth interviews (3) with thirteen teachers
• Nine countries
• Twelve courses
• Five female teachers
• Eight male teachers
• Age group
  • Three aged 40 – 49 years
  • Six aged 50 – 59 years
  • Four aged 60 – 69 years
Experience Australian VET - Domestic

- Range: 1 – 30 years
- Average: 19.3 years

Experience Australian VET - International

- Range: 3 weeks – 17 years
- Average: 3.9 years
Qualifications – Education and Training

• CIV TAE – 11
• Higher level - 9

Qualifications – Highest Level – Vocational

• CIV – 1
• Diploma – 3
• Degree – 3 (1 holds 2 degrees)
• Graduate Diploma – 2
• Masters – 4
COURSES

Diploma Architectural Technology
Diploma Business (2)
Diploma Electro-technology
Diploma Events Management
Diploma Graphic Design
Diploma International Business
Diploma Project Management
CIV Frontline Management
CIV TAE
CIII Aged Care
CIII Hospitality
SOA Hospitality
FINDINGS
FACTORS

1. Information
2. Resources
3. Materials
4. Institutional arrangements
5. Student readiness
A constraint for 10 teachers who reported not receiving sufficient information to adequately prepare them for teaching overseas.

Thus, the only learning was the experience itself.

Important as teachers had no pre-existing frame of reference for teaching in a foreign country.

Important for curriculum literacy (Ariav 1988).
Sam, Hospitality, Asia
"Mary, Business, China"
A constraint for nine teachers who either did not have access to facilities, equipment and/or supplies or if they did they were not up to the required standard.

Particularly important for supporting the practical and technical components of the curriculum.

Important for curriculum fidelity (Fullen 2011).
"Jo, Electro-technology, China"
Sean, Architecture, Iran

Image: Mazzo1982 (Istockphoto.com: 599249192)

Image: SunflowerEY (Istockphoto.com: 492413630)
“Damien, Hospitality, Pacific”
MATERIALS

- A constraint for ten teachers who expected to use learning and teaching materials that were relevant to the students' lives.

- Teachers needed materials for the ‘non-endorsed’ components of Training Packages.

- Materials were important for curriculum adaptation (Berman & McLaughlin 1975; Fullen 1991) or contextualisation.
“Damien, Hospitality, Pacific”
“Mick, Business, China”
• Arrangements such as timetables, room allocations, and work placements were an issue for eight teachers.

• These factors had a pervasive influence on who could be taught, what could be taught, when it could be taught, for how long it could be taught and if it could be taught at all.

• Institutional arrangements were inadequate due to a lack of stakeholder understanding (Spillane 2004), planning (House 1996) and communication (Fullen 2001).
Jo, Electro-technology, China
Student readiness was an issue for thirteen teachers:

- Goals and interests
- Language proficiency
- Prior knowledge and abilities
- Learning styles and preferences.

Influenced teachers’ capacity to engage students and facilitate their achievement of the outcomes.
Annabel, Project Management, Middle East
"Rowena, TAE, Pacific"
Combination of factors

• The five factors influenced:
  • Teacher preparedness
  • The means for enactment
  • The arrangements for enactment
  • Teachers’ capacity to engage students.

• These factors manifested differently in each context and determined the degree of situational readiness for curriculum implementation.
ESSENCE OF THE EXPERIENCE

DISSONANCE
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In some situations, the extent of dissonance was so great, the question of how teachers might achieve fidelity and equivalence was fraught with incommensurability.

Inequitable curriculum situations inflicted the greatest challenges for teachers.
CONCLUSION
A teacher's capacity to enact the curriculum as intended, relies not only on their previous knowledge and experience of the curriculum, associated pedagogies and regulations, but also on their ability to understand and influence the range of contextual factors associated with curriculum implementation.
However, it is important to acknowledge that many of the problems teachers faced were inherent to the curriculum model because the conditions of offshore provision are not accounted for in Training Packages.

Yet, as can be seen these conditions set limits on what can be taught, supported and experienced.
Thus, in many offshore situations it is difficult for teachers to both enact Training Packages with fidelity (equivalence) and adapt (contextualise) it for relevance.

This has implications for the relevance, quality and sustainability of Australia’s provision of transnational VET.
It is hoped that this analysis is useful to those people who manage and support teachers overseas because it informs the types of professional, material, practical and institutional support that they need to understand their situation and guide their enactment of Training Packages in different countries.
For example, the importance of:

• Customised induction and professional development programs for teachers to learn about the cultural context and develop the knowledge and skills to teach students with backgrounds, knowledge learning styles, goals, interests and abilities different to those they have taught in Australia or another country.

• Negotiating with local sponsors to ensure that the antecedent conditions are in place, accessible and at a reasonable standard.

• Contextualised teaching and learning materials relevant to the students’ goals, interests, language, abilities and context.
These findings are also a useful reminder that the cultural values imposed by Training Packages in other countries are not always mutually understood or meaningful between teachers bound to the Australian VET curriculum model and their students and sponsors.

These findings also question the relevance of a policy objective of standardised outcomes for the provision of Australian VET internationally.
Questions